THE STATUTES OF THE SCHOOL OF NISIBIS

EDITED, TRANSLATED AND FURNISHED
WITH A COMMENTARY

BY

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PREFACE

In all the history of spiritual and intellectual culture of the Syrian Orient, there are few pages as charming as those which testify to the vigor, spiritual power, intellectual energy, creative puissance and strength of enrichment which became manifest in the School of Nisibis, able to enliven Christian thought and action. Since my first acquaintance with this institution I have felt its impact. Its attraction was too powerful. I had to return to it again and again. So also greater plans were generated and have ripened during the decades, the fruits of which I hope to present in the near future. This is a comprehensive study devoted to this institution and its contribution to the spiritual treasury of the Syrian Orient.

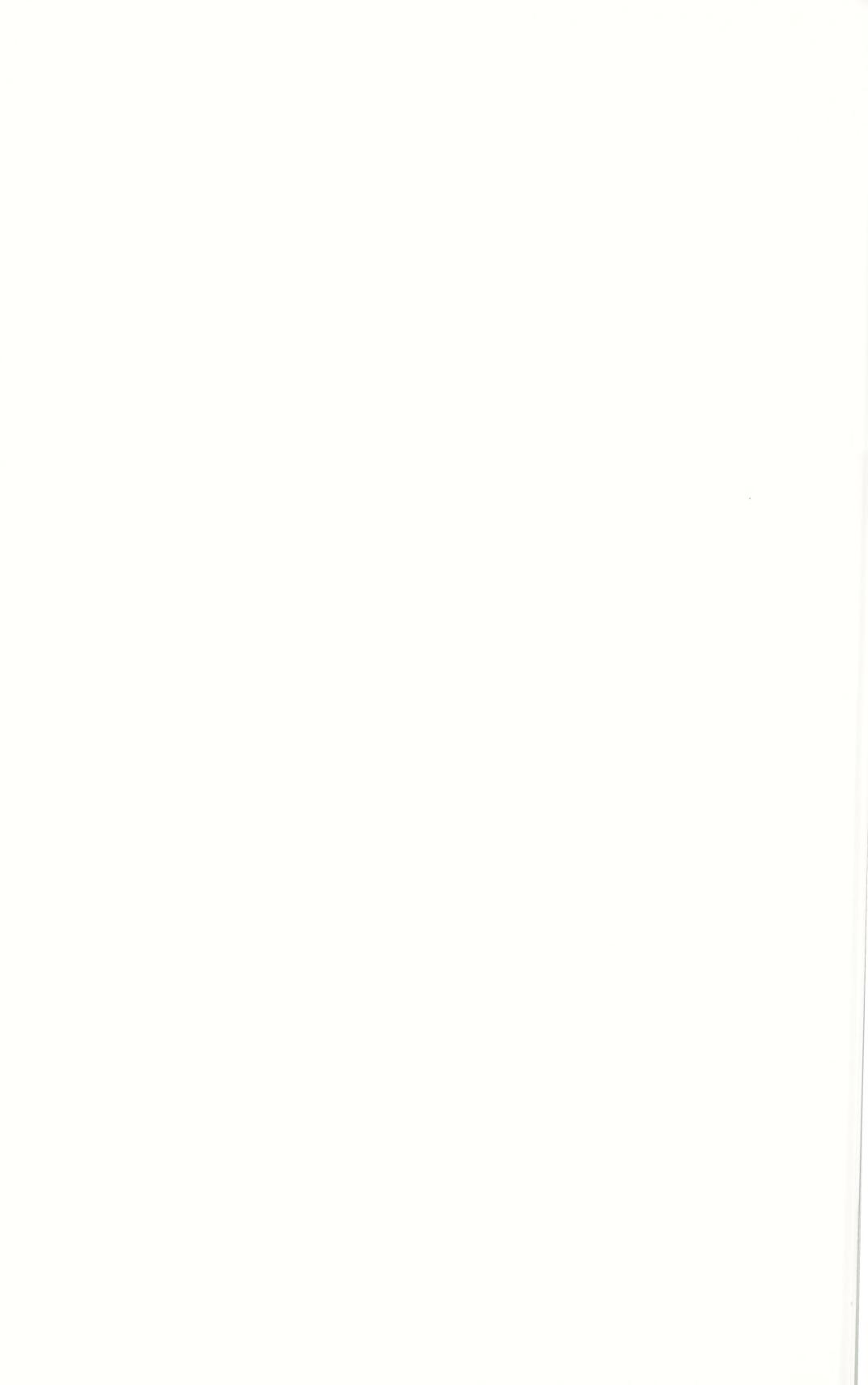
In connection with this greater project it was necessary to collect the manuscript evidence, in this way carrying out systematic and extensive preparation at the very foundations. In this undertaking special attention was given to documents which emanated from the School of Nisibis itself. Determined to increase the bulk of the manuscript evidence, patient search for codices led me repeatedly on long journeys to remote areas where the manuscripts have found their hiding-places.

Everything possible has been done to trace the manuscript evidence. I am grateful that this could be done. Through these lines I extend my thanks to all who have given permission to use their manuscript resources. With deep gratitude I think of the kindness and hospitality which I have experienced in these places in Europe and the Orient.

The completion of this manuscript research and the termination of the preparation of this work for edition would not have been possible without a scholarship granted to me by the American Council of Learned Societies. Through these pages I express my deep gratitude for all the encouragement and help.

June, 1961.

A. Vööbus.



INTRODUCTION

Unusual importance attaches to the texts edited and translated on the following pages. Whenever the history of culture of the Syrian Orient is written, an important place will be given to the contribution that emanated from the center of learning to which the Syrians under the Persian rule have looked with great pride and sense of reverence. This is the School of Nisibis. When, as a result of the doctrinal quarrels, the light had to go out in the School of Edessa, it was destined to become a prelude to another institution. The torch of learning was carried beyond the Byzantine border and set up in the closest town at the frontier, namely Nisibis. For centuries until it was finally annexed by the Persians Nisibis had been a place of pride in the Eastern provinces of the Byzantium. Now, once again its past was enlivened by the impulses it received from the spiritual resources from which it had been separated.

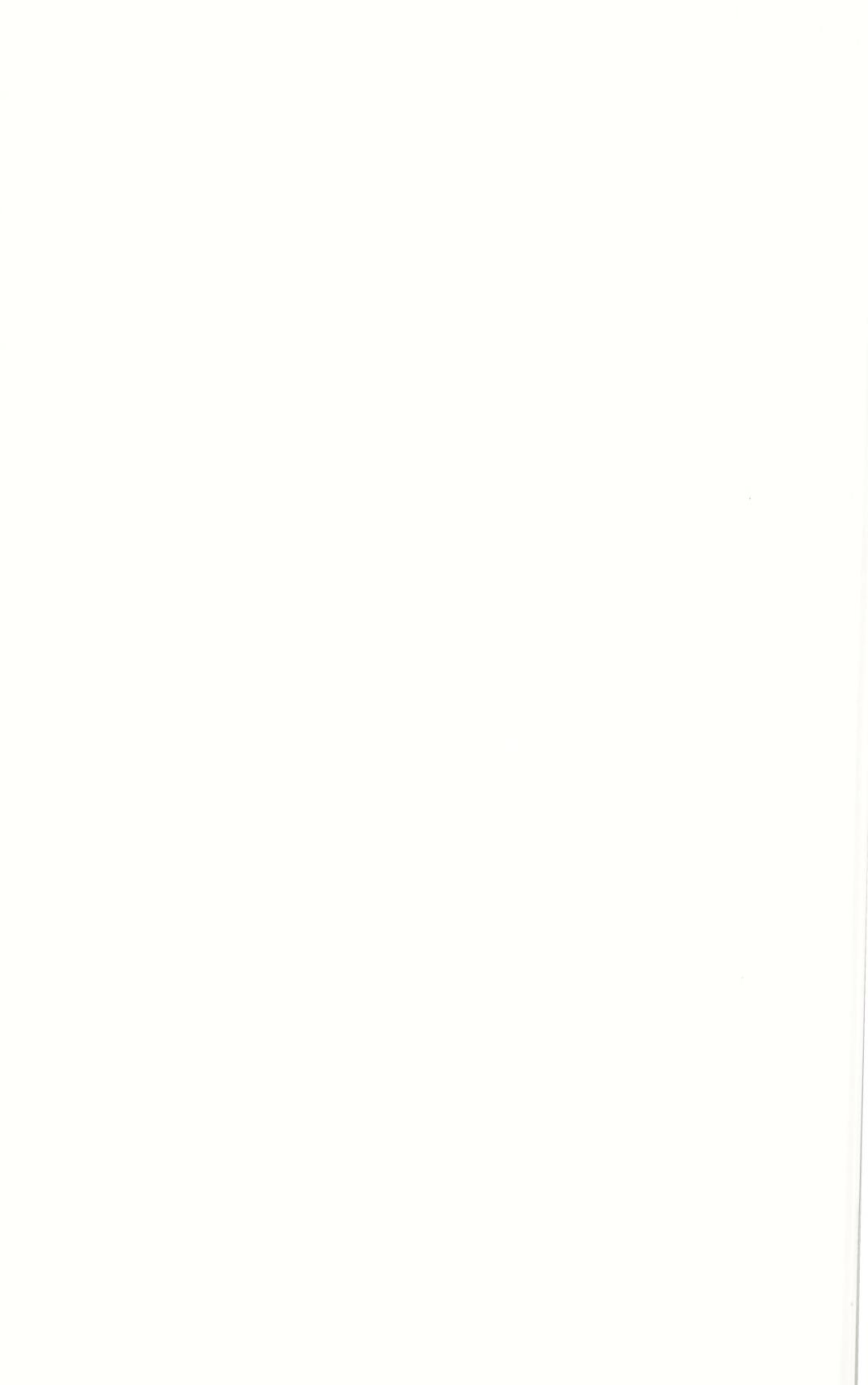
Soon after its foundation, the School of Nisibis embarked on a course of rapid progress, aided by an accumulation of favorable factors and advantageous circumstances, absorbing the best elements in the educational field in the Syrian realm of that time, and so assuming the place of preeminence among the schools of Eastern Syria.

While nothing has survived of the original sources connected with the regulation of work and life in the School of Edessa, which would help us to look inside its operation, good fortune has preserved even several documents which emanate from the School of Nisibis itself. These documents even include the statutes of the institution. Thus, these are of an unusual nature and importance from the angle of the history of spiritual culture and literature. They lead us inside the precincts of the school, into its administration, classroom situation and life within the walls of the institution. Moreover, indirectly they also permit us to see a reflection of the pattern of life and work in the School of Edessa since these statutes grew out from the practice and traditions kept in the School of Edessa. Furthermore among documents in the genre of directives and rules given to the schools, they occupy a unique place.

When it is realized that the School of Nisibis was a unique center of higher learning and that it has played such an extraordinary role in the history of spiritual and intellectual culture, that, in fact, it must be considered the only institution of its kind, the value of these statutes becomes greatly enhanced.

I have purposely translated the original as literally as possible in order to retain something of the flavor of the Syriac texts. Those who are well versed in Syriac do not need a translation but others who are not familiar with this language will appreciate a closer contact with the original of the document.

PART I
PROLEGOMENA



THE FOUNDING OF THE SCHOOL OF NISIBIS

Among all the schools of the Eastern Syrians there was one which claimed to be the universitas litterarum. This was the school located in Nisibis, which as the pride and honor of the Byzantium, since 361 had been annexed by the Persians. As a unique establishment among other foci of spiritual and intellectual life, this school has played a particular role in the history of intellectual culture of the Syrian Christianity. It was destined to reach an extraordinary élan. Immediately after it appeared on the scene, it became an extraordinarily important source of inspiration and strength for spiritual renewal. Viewing the life as a whole in its manifoldness, as unfolded by the Eastern Syrian Christianity, its part is, indeed, structural.

1. CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH LED TO THE FOUNDING

The circumstances which led to the founding of the School of Nisibis stand in relation to the difficulties and hardships that befell the School of Edessa and developed so far that the situation became unbearable there. Finally they led to the liquidation of the School of Edessa.

However, the events leading up to the foundation are enveloped in fog. The line between historical truth and legend is often blurred. To be sure, the sources which stem from the School of Nisibis, embedded in the works of Barḥadbešabbā ¹ and Barḥadbešabbā of Ḥolwān ², report in detail ³ about the circumstances preceding the birth of the new school. They tell that after his final departure from Edessa Narsai crossed the Persian border, planning to journey

¹ Histoire, ed. NAU, p. 599 ff.

with the departure from Edessa are only very briefly mentioned by Bar-

² Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 383 f.

hadbešabbā, *ibid.*, p. 384.

³ The circumstances in connection

into inner Persia. He came to Nisibis, stopping off at a monastery. It is then recorded when Barṣaumā, the bishop of Nisibis, learned of Narsai's presence, he removed him therefrom, brought him into the city to the accompaniment of a reception of honor. This action had a farreaching effect: he persuaded Narsai to stay in Nisibis and won him for his project to establish a great school there.

In these sources we are told this and that and several things at greater length, yet clarity is absent. Moreover not everything is to be trusted. It is obvious that tendentious influences have made inroads and the factual situation is blurred. One tendency is apparent: to retouch the portrait of Barṣaumā, putting a brighter halo around his head. A more realistic account is preserved elsewhere — a chapter in the Chronicle of Seert 4. It affirms Narsai did not plan to journey beyond Nisibis - quite the contrary. Further, in seeking an opportunity to settle there and continue his activity, he was offered and accepted leadership of a small school founded by a certain Šem'on 5. Later — after initial success? - Barṣaumā became interested and took matters into his own hands. This report is interesting and provides a hint that there was a more realistic pre-history. It seems to point to a modest beginning before plans were laid for a grandiose project. It also implies that the alleged and eulogized power of clairvoyance and vision on the part of Barşaumā must be heavily reduced. It did not happen as suddenly as other sources want us to believe. This narrative in brief inspires more trust at several points 6.

However it may have been at the inception of the project, in any case the estimate of the situation was correct in recognizing the potential importance of the refugee director for the future of Nisibis and Christianity in Persia 7.

Barḥadbešabbā claims to record the steps undertaken for the establishment of the School of Nisibis. Action required moved in

⁴ Histoire nestorienne, ed. Scher, VII, p. 114.

⁵ Šem^con Garmqaiā, i.e. Šem^con of Bēt Garmai.

⁶ Contrary to this source the handling of the question of the school

of Šem'on in Barḥadbešabbā's report, *Histoire*, ed. NAU, p. 608, is somewhat puzzling.

⁷ See the deliberations *ibid.*, p. 606-608, and in Barḥadbešabbā, *Fondation*, ed. Scher, p. 384-386.

several directions ⁸: the acquirement of physical facilities, the establishment of the constituency of the community of the school and legislation for the institution. A new site and building were purchased for this purpose. Its location was in the vicinity of the church ⁹. Barṣaumā is reported to have taken care of the establishment of the first constituency of the school by reorganizing the educational work in Nisibis. We are told that an already existing school was merged with the new one ¹⁰. Finally Barṣaumā undertook steps to foster the consolidation of life and discipline in the new community, namely by legislation ¹¹.

The newly founded institution was able to begin its operation vigorously from the very beginning. The premises were as excellent as could be. Its model was the Alma Mater in Edessa ¹². Thus the image of the new school was already concrete, its shape already tested. The development of the new school was laid into the experienced hands of Narsai who had been a director in the School of Edessa for a long time. All the experiences in teaching and administration acquired there could be put into effect here. Further Narsai's reputation, renown and fame became an inestimable asset which must have manifested itself very soon, attracting a considerable part of the staff of teachers who had been Narsai's co-workers in Edessa. This must also have had its impact upon the pupils. In fact, that the greater part of the community of Edessa joined the new school, is reported by Barḥadbešabbā of Ḥolwān ¹³.

2. THE CHRONOLOGICAL PROBLEM

The tradition devolving upon the chronological question as to the departure of Narsai from Edessa is very tangled. As a result, the scholars have been divided about the time when the exodus

⁸ This part is very brief in Bar-HADBEŠABBĀ, *ibid.*, p. 386.

⁹ BARḤADBEŠABBĀ, Histoire, ed. NAU,p. 608.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 609. Here Šem^cōn appears as an interpreter of Kaškar.

¹¹ See page 57.

of the School of Nisibis as a transplantation of the School of Edessa into a new location, see page 47. See also Sūrin, *Mēmrā*, ed. Scher, p. 400.

¹³ Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 386.

of the teachers and students of Antiochian convictions left Edessa. Duval ¹⁴ and Wright ¹⁵ accepted the year 489 for this event. When Chabot published the first study on this subject 66 years ago, he proposed the year 489 as the date ¹⁶. Labourt took it over ¹⁷. A bit later Nelz writing his work on the schools in the Orient came to the same conclusion ¹⁸.

A rival position has pushed aside these proposals. Duval ¹⁹ argued that this exodus took place in 457 A.D. Mingana ²⁰, Scher ²¹, Hermann ²², Baumstark ²³, Hayes ²⁴, Chabot ²⁵, Leclercq ²⁶ and Ortiz de Urbina ²⁷ followed suit.

Both of these views have appealed to the support in the sources, which were marshalled behind each of these positions.

According to one source, the blow which ended the School of Edessa struck 'after' the death of Hībā, who died in 457. That is the tradition which emerges from the Chronicle of Arbēl by Mešīḥāzekā ²⁸. It testifies that when Hībā died, the fate of the School of Edessa was sealed. Narsai and his colleagues were expelled from Edessa. This is the way how the text has been understood. However, it is not absolutely clear what the span is behind the remark: 'after his (i.e. Hībā's) death'. This might refer in a general way to a longer period ²⁹.

There is a group of texts which gives quite a different answer

- 14 Histoire d'Édesse, p. 432.
- 15 Syriac Literature, p. 58.
- 16 L'École de Nisibe, p. 46.
- 17 Christianisme dans l'empire perse, p. 138, 141.
 - 18 Theologische Schulen, p. 79.
 - 19 Littérature syriaque, p. 344, 346.
- 20 Narsai, Homiliae et carmina, I, Introductio, p. 7.
- 21 Écrivains syriens, p. 6. He was so certain that in Barhadbešabbā, Histoire, p. 600, he wanted to correct the source in the interest of this view, see p. 600, footnote 1 and p. 603, footnote 1.
 - 22 Schule von Nisibis, p. 115.
 - 23 Geschichte syrischer Literatur, p.

- 104; cf. Syrische Literatur, p. 179. BARDENHEWER, Geschichte altk. Literatur, IV, p. 407 followed his views.
 - ²⁴ École d'Édesse, p. 208, 214.
 - 25 Littérature syriaque, p. 50.
 - 26 École de Nisibe, col. 1378.
 - 27 Patrologia syriaca, p. 108.
- 28 Sources syriaques, ed. MINGANA, p. 66.
- 29 Such a possibility becomes particularly feasible if we take into account the fact that the rule of Abbušṭā, bishop of Arbēl, lasted from about 450 till 498 according to the chronological calculations, cf. Sachau, Chronik von Arbela, p. 17.

to the chronological side of the question. In its earliest form this tradition emerges in the letter of Šem'ōn of Bēt Aršam. In the hardships and difficulties that struck the School of Edessa after the death of Hībā. Then it tells that the man who determined to resolve the situation definitively, was the man who succeeded Nūnā upon the latter's death — Bishop Qūrā. According to this account the expulsion of the teachers coincided with the liquidation of the school 30. Šem'ōn's testimony regarding the period of Qūrā as the time of Narsai's departure, is not the only voice that speaks in this way. There are others which rescue it from isolation. That Mari supports the same tradition may not mean very much 31. But when this testimony also occurs in the work of one who draws upon the traditions of the School of Nisibis, namely Barḥadbešabbā of the School of Nisibis 32, then it is not easy to push it aside in this way as it sometimes has been done.

At least one recognition dawns upon us. Confronted with such a contradictory state in our sources, it can by no means be certain that we have a right guide in following the Chronicle of Arbēl. As this constellation of the sources shows a circumspect approach in this intricate matter is more than justified.

3. THE SOLUTION OF THE CHRONOLOGICAL PROBLEM

If our decision for the final outcome is to be based upon the factors considered up to this point and arguments which have been used by the scholars, in the context of such a tangled situation we are less than eager to make any choice whatsoever. What are needed are criteria which can be used for judgement. Indeed, the

30 Epistola, ed. Assemani, p. 353. However his report is not free from some flaws. Šem on is certainly wrong when he tells us of the return of Barṣaumā as a result of this action that took place in 489. The truth is that Barṣaumā must have left the School of Edessa and returned much earlier. The tradition that this took place in 435, Ms. Vat. syr. 520, fol. 41 b, is

certainly wrong, since in 449 he still was in Edessa, Akten Ephes. Synode, p. 26. That Barṣaumā was already bishop of Nisibis before Narsai returned, is shown by our document, see page 47.

31 De patriarchis nest., ed. GIS-MONDI, p. 44.

32 Histoire, ed. NAU, p. 599 ff.; see Vööbus, School of Nisibis, II, 3.

sifting of all available texts and traditions yields some items which bear upon our problem and carry some weight affecting our final estimate of the situation. First, a critical attempt to remove what looks like varnish from the sources enables us to see a tendency of stretching the number of years in Narsai's activity and to push them to phantastic limits 33. Secondly, in regard to the chronology of Narsai's life, the only date which is historically reliable is the year 496 A.D. In that year he was still director of the School of Nisibis, as the text edited on the following pages, shows 34. However, this only reliable date can tell us very much. In itself, this date makes it most unlikely that Narsai's departure from Edessa could have happened in 457, antecedent to which he was in the office of the director for 20 years ³⁵.

This much has been gleaned from history despite the legends so intricately embedded in it. All we can now see from this perspective points to the fact, that the tradition relative to Narsai's departure in 457 cannot be taken seriously at all ³⁶.

Does this mean that we are now ready to fall into the arms of those who have maintained the year 489 as the date of Narsai's departure? We are not yet ready for this. This would be premature. The same circumspection which has led our steps up to now should guide us for the rest of our way of investigation.

The hope to find some reliable clues and direction in the scrutiny of the texts 37 does not fail. Indeed, here we can invoke a criterion of judgement, and this opens new vistas for our pathway. Namely in the traditions kept in the School of Nisibis there are elements which intrinsically display such evidence so as to make any conclusion other than historical reliability impossible. These we find in the records regarding the circumstances in connection with Narsai's departure 38. We do well to pay special attention to some

³⁴ See page 55, 59.

³⁵ BARHADBESABBA, Histoire.NAU, p. 599; BARHADBESABBA, Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 383. Cf. Ms. Šarf. Patr. 80, fol. 28 b.

³⁶ There are still other considerations that come into account, partic-

³³ See the full analysis, ibid., II, 3. ularly Narsai's contact with Ja'qōb of Sarūg and its impact upon Narsai's literary creation, see Vööbus, School of Nisibis, chapter III, 3.

³⁷ See the full treatment ibid., chapter III, 3.

³⁸ BARHADBESABBA, Histoire, NAU, p. 599 ff.

unpleasant and bitter feelings and painful sentiments among Narsai's friends after his precipitate flight from Edessa, which made it necessary to defend Narsai's action 39. These features are particularly important for our inquiry owing to their quality 40. No one would defend somebody who was not actually attacked by criticism. Furthermore, such matters reflecting painful memories could never have been invented. Thus, indications are as clear as can be that in the midst of quicksands here we are standing upon historical ground. This we use as a point of departure. And as soon as we proceed we note an advance : the mise-en-scène of the departure of Narsai is set out with the utmost clearness. His departure came unexpectedly and he left Edessa alone 41. Such a picture is confirmed by another source of the same quarters 42. It seems that there is even a third independent avenue to the same tradition 43. All these conditions and circumstances which are conjured up in these reports are entirely different from the circumstances that were caused by the liquidation of the School of Edessa in 489 44 for which action Bishop Qūrā made careful preparations, securing for himself the decree from Emperor Zeno 45.

These findings prompt us to conclude that Narsai's departure must have taken place after 471, the year of Qūrā's enthronement, but years before the liquidation of the School of Edessa in 489 46. These are the calculations which point to the period during which the founding of the School of Nisibis has taken place.

- 39 This situation must have had a serious nature so that Narsai had to pacify the feelings and sentiments of his friends and adherents, producing an apology, *ibid.*, p. 604 f.
- 40 It is obvious that Barḥadbešabbā is actually quoting from a writing of Narsai written for this purpose. Thereby an excerpt of it has been preserved, important for the enlightenment of the historical question of Narsai's departure, see Vööbus, Vestige d'une lettre de Narsai.
- 41 BARHADBEŠABBĀ, Histoire, ed. NAU, p. 603.

- 42 BARHADBEŠABBĀ, Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 384.
- 43 Mari, De patriarchis nest., ed Gismondi, p. 44.
- 44 Chronicon Edessenum LXX'_1, ed. GUIDI, p. 8.
- 45 ŠEM'ŌN OF BĒT ARŠAM, Epistola, ed. Assemani, p. 353.
- 46 Ζήνων ὁ βασιλεὺς ἀντικαταστρέψας τὴν ἐν Ἐδέσση τῶν Περσῶν καλουμένην διατριβὴν, ὡς τὰ Νεστορίου καὶ Θεοδώρου παραδιδοῦσαν διδασκαλίαν, ἠθέτησεν, Theodorus Ana-GNOSTES, Excerpta ex historia eccl., ed. Migne, col. 209.



THE DIRECTORS RELATED TO THE STATUTES

1. NARSAI

In the following some introductory remarks are offered regarding the directors who have contributed to the growth of this institution and who appear on the pages of the document edited here.

When Narsai took the rule of the new school into his hands, he was already not only a teacher with stature but also an experienced administrator. He brought with him a thorough familiarity with the duties of directorship and a rich experience in teaching, gathered in the School of Edessa. All this preparation became an asset in the foundation and the organization of the School of Nisibis.

As a person ¹, Narsai enjoyed an immense reputation. He must have been particularly powerful through the combination of various gifts and talents. His piety and asceticism were objects of admiration. His learning and knowledge were regarded as something unique. His talents in poetry and his mastery of language have been immortalized by the tradition in the epitheton: 'the harp of the (Holy) Spirit'. This he has earned by his literary creation ³ in the eyes of his contemporaries as exceptional. To be sure, traditions regarding his literary work have grown without proper control ⁴, but trustworthy data still appear in the earliest sources ⁵. These speak of the genre of didactic poetry. On the other hand the genre of literature devoted to exegetical work shows that Narsai did not belong to those regarded as authorities on whose shoulders the hermeneutic traditions rest ⁶.

- ¹ Born in 'Ain Dūlbā in the country of Ma'altā.
- ² 'Abdīšō', Catalogus, ed. Assemani, p. 65.
- ³ See also BAUMSTARK, Geschichte syr. Literatur, p. 109 ff.
- 4 See Histoire nestorienne, ed. Scher, VII, p. 115; cf. also 'Abdīšō', Catalogus, ed. Assemani, p. 63 ff.
- 5 BARHADBEŠABBĀ, Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 386; BARHADBEŠABBĀ, Histoire, ed. Nau, p. 612.
- 6 Very instructive is a compendium of exegetical knowledge on the Pentateuch. Here many authorities are quoted frequently, but Narsai's name appears only once here, Ms. Ming. syr 553, fol. 87 a. The same is the

Narsai's title, quoted above, shows where his strength lies — in the genre of didactic poetry, cast in seven and twelve syllable meter. This gift he unfolded before the eyes of his amazed contemporaries. He expressed himself with a richness seldom seen. What has survived destruction are parts of collections of various size which obviously were arranged within the framework of the church year and oriented according to the liturgical traditions 7 . Through these $m\bar{e}mr\bar{e}$ a master speaks to us, who belongs to the few of the most eminent who have reached the zenith of producing elegance of style in Syriac and of writing what were to become the recognized classics in the Syriac literature.

Such a creation necessitates at least some explanatory words. It is unavoidable to characterize briefly the nature of Narsai's literary creation in the $m\bar{e}mr\bar{e}$, the other genders of his poetical work cannot be touched upon here.

Most of Narsai's literary creation grew out of the world of the Bible. The many facets of its thought stimulated his literary meditation. He focussed upon these inexhaustible sources of illumination and inspiration again and again. Although there is among his $m\bar{e}mr\bar{e}$ a very small cycle in the form of exegetical studies, in which he treats the biblical texts of Genesis in a more systematic, methodical and scholarly fashion, his real interest does not lie in this direction. His practical mind needed greater blocks of themes and topics more elastic and profitable for his didactic interests. So in the Old Testament he was attracted by biblical history, stories of the patriarchs, and other personalities. Episodes relating to religious experiences sparked his particular fervor. A still larger number of the $m\bar{e}mr\bar{e}$ draw upon the New Testament sources. These treat narratives in the Life of Jesus, episodes in the gospel tradi-

situation in the Gannat būssāmē, Ms. Ryl. syr. 41. References to Narsai appear in the commentaries of Īšōʿdād, Ms. Br. Mus. or. 4524, Commentare, Commentaire I-II and in Isḥāq Šebadnāiā, Ms. Ming. syr. 57, but these are easily recognized as having been taken from the mēmrē. In the commentaries of Īšōʿdād of Merv, bishop of Ḥedatā, on the New

Testament, Commentaries, I-V, there is not a single reference to Narsai.

7 Homiliae et carmina, ed. MINGANA, I-II. However, this edition contains only a part of the mēmrē which have survived; the rest is still in manuscripts waiting to be edited. See a comprehensive survey of these materials in Vööbus, School of Nisibis, chapter III, 4.

tion, parables, events in the history of salvation, and outstanding evangelists and apostles. In the same manner also the Christian Kerygma has provided themes for a number of the $m\bar{e}mr\bar{e}$. Various truths of the Christian proclamation have been set into verse.

The $m\bar{e}mr\bar{e}$ which bear witness to his interest in the cult constitute an important part of his literary creation. Many of his $m\bar{e}mr\bar{e}$ were put into the setting of the church-year and are liturgically orientated. Many deal especially with the festivals and feast-days. These speak loudly of the inspiration Narsai drew from his desire to elucidate the meaning of worship. Besides the more general gender of his $m\bar{e}mr\bar{e}$ he devoted to the same purpose also some commentaries on the liturgies. This material once more reveals his desire to foster the cult and make its liturgy alive and more meaningful.

The mēmrē which have been inspired by other sources are in the minority. A small cycle of the mēmrē owes its birth to his reflection on special issues of Christian ethics. Theological reflection, speculation and finesse of dogmatic definition play an insignificant part in the body of Narsai's literary creation. Only occasionally did Narsai rely on these sources for inspiration. His practically oriented mind obviously saw little attraction and stimulation in this area.

The history of the Christian church has rarely excited Narsai's mind. Only a few facets captured his imagination sufficiently to find expression in his $m\bar{e}mr\bar{e}$: confessors, martyrs, Christian mission and the pillars of the Antiochian School, Diodor, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius.

The conditions in the church also moved him to speak. Through these verses one can sense some of the atmosphere in which he lived, worked and struggled, and some of the weaknesses and failures in the Christian communities and in the clergy, conditions which rested heavily upon his heart ⁷.

Br. Mus. orient. 9367 and 9368 with 64 mēmrē (36 and 28 respectively). After these come: Ms. Baghd. 603, part I-IV: 51; Ms. Baghd. 605: 38; Ms. Ming. syr. 55: 37; Ms. Mus. Borg. syr. 79: 33; Ms. Mus. Borg. syr. 83:

⁷ The collections of the $m\bar{e}mr\bar{e}$ are of various sizes. The largest collection in Ms. Alqoš 160 and 161 contains 70 $m\bar{e}mr\bar{e}$ (28 and 42 respectively). Ms. Br. Mus. orient. 5463 has the same number. Next to this is Ms.

Narsai's manifold contribution, as teacher, author and director, is the more important since it took place at a time which was the most significant epoch for Christendom in Persia, namely when the foundations were laid for the Christianity of the Nestorian creed.

The chronological frame of Narsai's life and work is very difficult, even hopelessly confused. In the sources at our disposal we have to do with a gradual agglomeration of additions. Their boasting of exact data for all the phases of Narsai's work is too much. Even phantastic numbers have been given. In such a situation the only secure way is that which is offered by the texts published on the following pages. Their testimony is that Narsai was still in his office in the year 496, namely when the new legislation took place.

Further, there is a report about an episode regarding an intrigue, arranged by Narsai's adversaries as to how he was denounced by certain persons whose names are mentioned, and that this took place when Qawad besieged Amid ⁸. If, indeed, this story is historically true, which, incidentally, is supported in a slightly different but independent way by another source, then Narsai must still have been alive in 503, the year when this siege took place ⁹.

That this sad event in the stormy history of Amid is related to the end of Narsai's days emerges in another source independent from the previous one, namely in the Chronicle of Arbēl. This source does not speak about the intrigue and plots, but tells us about the war between Emperor Anastasius and Qawad, that the Persians took away along with Amid many places from Byzantine territory. But then the Persians were compelled to return in order to defend their own country against the incursion of the Huns. In this connection the chronicle adds that Mār Narsai died while the troops were in Nisibis ¹⁰.

This configuration in tradition, receiving support from two different quarters, can be regarded as reasonably certain that at the time the fortunes of war began to turn against the Persians, Narsai closed his eyes for ever.

^{32;} Ms. Baghd. 601: 31; Ms. Baghd. 602: 25; Ms. Berl. Sach. 174, 175, 176: 25; Ms. Vat. syr. 588: 20; Ms. Vat. syr. 594: 17.

⁸ BARHADBEŠABBĀ, Histoire, ed. NAU,

p. 613.

⁹ Īšōe of Zuqnīn, Chronicle, ed. Wright, p. 50 f.

¹⁰ MEŠĪHĀZEKĀ, Histoire, ed. MINGANA, p. 70.

2. ABRAHAM

After Narsai's death Abraham became the third director of the school. In his person the leadership went to a man very close to Narsai. Abraham was a relative, who since his youth had grown up under Narsai's hand and had been instructed by him. So Narsai had created an image of the school in him. Also in other respects Abraham stepped into the vestiges of his great teacher. In piety, asceticism and spirit he was no less revered. In some respects he seems to have excelled his master. In teaching he enjoyed a great reputation. At least in one respect he was credited with special accomplishment. It is reported that for many students it was very difficult to understand the meaning of the Syriac translations of the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the normative textbooks in the curriculum, since these were complicated because of the intricacy of the Greek style of Theodore. Abraham made them palatable to the students and so facilitated instruction and learning 11. Also his literary creation reveals a wider range. This change is marked by a definite transition from poetry to prose. Besides his contribution to the exegetical field 12, evidenced by the tradition 13, Abraham also entered studies of historical nature 14.

There is one area in which Abraham first was not fully prepared. In administration he did not have the necessary experience. Tradition has kept the remembrances of some unpleasant episodes which are explained by the lack of experience in his youthful age ¹⁵. This gave

11 BARHADBEŠABBĀ, *Histoire*, ed. Nau, p. 622.

12 BARHADBEŠABBĀ, Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 389; 'Abdīšō', Catalogus, ed. Assemani, p. 71.

13 In a repertory of exegetical traditions of the great luminaries in this discipline on the Pentateuch the most frequently quoted authority is Abraham, Ms. Ming. syr. 553, fol. 8 a ff., Ms. Alqoš 34 and Ms. Vat. syr. 578. See also Ms. Berl. orient. fol. 1261. Other remnants in Ms. Jer. Patr. syr. 10, fol. 125 a, 188 b and Ms. Br. Mus. orient. 4524, fol. 84 a, 135 a (Lev.,

Sam.); Ms. Ming. syr. 58, fol. 17 b. (Psalms).

14 The text in 'Abdišō', Catalogus, ed. Assemani, p. 71 is so corrupted that it does not reveal the character of this work. The correct title is: 'the Cause of the Foundation (of the Schools) in Summary Chapters', see Ms. Borg. syr. 1, fol. 198 b; Ms. Borg. syr. 34, fol. 116 a; Ms. Borg. syr. 38, fol. 49 b; Ms. Par. syr. 315, fol. 59 a and Ms. Br. Mus. orient. 4069. fol. 112 a. Cf. 'Abdīšō', Catalogus, ed. Vööbus.

15 Sources syriaques, ed. MINGANA, p. 73 f.

ground even for intrigues ¹⁶. There evidently have been unfortunate experiences which must have embittered Abraham's life, although what exactly happened, the sources try to pass by quickly or cover with a veneer of free adjustments in the facts. According to all we are able to find out Jōḥannān of Bēt Rabban was appointed Abraham's assistant or even co-administrator ¹⁷.

However, where Abraham first failed he could give later compensation. Tradition attributes great accomplishments to him. Under his directorship the efflorescence of the school reached such a degree that the size of the student body passed the number of 1000 ¹⁸. Tradition also credits him with accomplishments in undertaking commensurate steps to cope with the needs of the advancing institution. These involved the expansion of the physical facilities and the reorganization of the institution for more effective work. Thus new buildings for the residence of students, study and maintenance were created, and the maintenance of the neglected part of the teaching personnel put on solid financial footing ¹⁹.

Flourishing life, however, was not spared from setbacks. The blow came which closed the school for 2 years ²⁰. Obviously political reasons were involved in this action. And when the school could resume its operation, not all the students who in the meantime had attended other schools, returned.

Chronologically speaking, Abraham's case is in even deeper darkness than that of his great predecessor. There is no solid element which could be a point of departure. How long he directed the school is not clear. He is reported to have guided the instruction for 60 years ²¹. The tradition on this matter is remarkably consistent. However, the possibilities of checking its trustworthiness are nil. Only one observation of merit can be brought forth in this connection. At the time Mešīḥāzekā wrote his annalistic work, Abraham still occupied the chair. Since he refers to the return of

16 In this period Elīšas bar Qūzbāiē took over the leadership, Barhadbe-šabbā, Histoire, ed. Nau, p. 620. This tradition, however, does not deserve trust, since it obviously has confused the picture, see the discussion of these problems in Vööbus, School of Nisibis, chapter IV.

- 17 About this Jōḥannān see ibid. chapter VII.
- 18 Barhadbešabbā, *Histoire*, ed. Nau, p. 620.
 - 19 Ibid., p. 620 ff.
 - 20 Ms. Ming. syr. 547, fol. 80 b.
- 21 BARHADBEŠABBĀ, *Histoire*, ed. NAU, p. 630.

the Catholicos Abā from Bēt Hūzāiē ²² in the year 551, we can infer that Abraham was at that time still in office. According to our sources Abraham was able to continue in the office of director until about 569 A.D.

3. HENĀNĀ

After a period in which the post of the director was filled only for a shorter time by others ²³ the leadership went to Ḥenānā. He did not only take over the rule for a long period, but was a man who exercised great influence reaching far beyond the activities within the school. The spell of his reputation drew also other schools into the orbit of his influence ²⁴.

For his admirers Ḥenānā was an exceptional luminary in personal devotion, personality and intellectual capacity. In this respect he was celebrated as a coryphee without counterpart. This is illustrated by an eulogy given about him, written by a grateful disciple at a time when Ḥenānā still was in the school 25. In fact Ḥenānā was a man of stature, equipped with many gifts. Cords of tradition did not bind him to the beaten track. In exegesis he went his own way, leaving the pure grammatical, historical exegesis of the Antiochian school, refined methodologically by Theodore of Mopsuestia. Thereby in the stream of exegetical traditions of the Eastern Syrians Ḥenānā appears as a new tributary. That all this meant enrichment of the exegetical traditions is shown by the vibration of his influence long after the echo of controversy, which Henānā had aroused, had disappeared 26. Also in his theology Ḥenānā went his own way and did not conceal his penchant for Origen. The range of Ḥenānā's spirit is reflected also in his literary creation, which produced a

22 Sources syriaques, ed. MINGANA, p. 75.

23 Barḥadbešabbā claims that after Abraham's death the rule over the school went to Īšōʻiahb of Bēt 'Arbaiā, Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 389 f. Also his own words seem to allude to this, Synodicon orientale, ed. Chabot, p. 167₁₆. He resigned after 2 years in order to become bishop of Arzūn. After him the directorship was laid

on Abraham Niṣībnāiā, BARḤADBEŠAB-BĀ, Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 390. Sūrīn calls him Abraham Qardaḥē, Mēmrā, ed. Scher, p. 400_{13-14} . He could direct the school only for one year.

24 BARHADBEŠABBĀ, Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 392₁₂₋₁₃.

25 BARHADBESABBA, Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 392.

DIETTRICH, Išoʻdadh's Stellung,p. LX ff.

large number of commentaries, expositions of the symbol and liturgy, and other works ²⁷.

Such a spirit at the helm of the institution brought the school once again to its élan. If we are to believe Marī, the number of students reached the mark of 800 ²⁸. However this was a zenith before a decline of critical nature. The work in the school was precipitated into such a situation by the implications of conflicts and strifes for which Ḥenānā had himself to blame.

Henānā's reorientation on his theological thinking contained so much explosive force, since it meant a departure from the normative, namely the authority of Theodore of Mopsuestia. Thus, for many Ḥenānā was nothing else than an enfant terrible, who had succumbed to heterodox views and had perverted the faith. There are even authors who have left him out of the list of the directors of the school and ignored him entirely 29. This agitation became more acute after the Catholicos Īšō'iahb pressed through a condemnation of Ḥenānā's work in 585 30, and inaugurated a new phase in the battles and quarrels which have delighted the Jacobites very much. These agitations became even more acute when Grīgōr became the metropolitan of Nisibis, about 596 31. Nevertheless Ḥenānā could retain his position in the school, which was possible only because he had influential friends and protectors in the hierarchy and at the royal court. However, if his adversaries could not get rid of him, they prepared a blow for him where no one could help him a revolt in the school. This meant a loss of the students with the exception of only a small group 32. However, in the light of the

p. 81 ff. This list hardly scratches the surface. He tries to justify this kind of treatment by admitting that the literary creation Henānā produced was far larger but that doctrinal consilerations had inspired him to tamper with the report: 'he has many (other) books, rejected on the account of the Interpreter'. About Henānā's literary work see Vööbus, School of Nisibis, chapter VIII.

28 De patriarchis nest., ed. GISMONDI, p. 54.

- 29 See a brief survey of the directors, $S\bar{U}R\bar{I}N$, $M\bar{e}mr\bar{a}$, ed. Scher, p. 400.
- 30 Canon II, Synodicon orientale, ed. Chabot, p. 136 ff.
- 31 According to the testimony of Mīkā in the year 907 A.Gr. = 596 A.D. Sabrīšō, bishop of Lāšōm became catholicos and about that time Grīgōr was consecrated as metropolitan of Nisibis, Elhā, Opus chronologicum, ed. Brooks et Chabot, p. 124.
- 32 Histore nestorienne, ed. Scher, XIII, p. 510.

documentary evidence in the texts published here, we are left with the impression that in the year 602 the school must have recovered at least partly from the loss of so much blood ³³. This impression is confirmed by some other observations ³⁴.

The chronological side of Ḥenānā's life and work is very unsatisfactory. The year in which he began his directorship is unknown, a guess puts it somewhere around 570. How long his rule lasted cannot be determined. Only considerations of a general nature can guide us. One source comes to our aid by telling of the attempts at the court to bring Ḥenānā or one of his disciples to the catholicos seat — an action ³⁵ which naturally must have caused much excitement ³⁶. That means that Ḥenānā was alive at that time, namely, after the death of Catholicos Grīgōr in 609. However, when in 612 Khosrau ordered a discussion between both rival ecclesiastical parties and in connection with this the bishops and monks prepared a memorandum and anathematized Ḥenānā and his partisans, Ḥenānā must have been resting from the strifes and quarrels for some years.

by a contemporary witness: 'then bishops of the Orient together with true believers, zealous of faith, were in excitement and were frightened, and all the bishops prepared themselves to travel immediately to the court in order to find a way out', ibid., p. 506.

³³ See page 103 f.

³⁴ Histoire nestorienne, ed. Scher, XIII, p. 528.

³⁵ These were the aspirations of Gabri'ēl, a physician, see Bābai, Taš'ītā de- $M\bar{a}r$ $G\bar{\imath}warg\bar{\imath}$, ed. Bedjan, p. 505 f.

³⁶ This terrifying eventuality haunted the church and upset it as described



ORIGIN OF THE STATUTES OF THE SCHOOL OF NISIBIS

1. THE FIRST CANONS OF NARSAI

Regarding the existence of these canons for the School of Nisibis we have no other information than that which appears in the texts edited on the following pages. No other source has preserved a memory of these. However, the preamble added to the first cycle of the canons, in the part that reports the alleged talk during the audience before Hōše', bishop of Nisibis, includes en passant a brief panoramic survey of the main events that preceded the foundation of the school and followed it which determined its rapid progress from the start. Here particularly the role played by Bishop Barṣaumā is depicted so that this had contributed vitally to the consolidation of the life of the school. Here the vestige of the existence of the first canons comes to the surface. On this occasion the text reads: 'He showed much care about it through the beautiful canons which he set up for them in order that they would be guided through these without disobedience and disorder. Also the whole community in one accord consented to the canons which Mar Barṣaumā the bishop set up for them. They did this even in writing and confirmed (it) by their signature' 1.

However, this claim that Bishop Barṣaumā set up these canons, is certainly not to be taken literally. In this respect the preamble is more colorful than factual. Such a statement has arisen out of the easily understandable reason to attribute much honor to the head of the church — a tendency which is reflected in all these preambles. This we should understand realistically, that Narsai and his colleagues were instrumental in the creation of these norms.

Further the text tells 2 that after the death of Bishop Barṣaumā

difficulties arose in the school through the activities of certain persons. Such a situation necessitated a new look at the legislation with the purpose of drawing up supplementary regulations. It is not said explicitly, but an impression is left — and this, indeed, is natural — that these first canons were amalgamated into an enlarged recension of the new statutes.

2. THE SECOND CANONS OF NARSAI

In regard to the circumstances of the establishment of this cycle of canons we learn in the longer preamble which has been added to the canons 3. This took place in the month of Tešrī qadim of the year 808 according to the Greeks, i.e. 496 A.D. At that time Hōše' occupied the bishop's seat in Nisibis, but Narsai was still the director in the school. The procedure is described so that the leadership of the school had an audience before the bishop and submitted to him their plan regarding the revision of the canons in the interest of the welfare of the school. Their motivation was that there were persons who had caused such difficulties which had endangered the reputation of the whole school, causing criticism from the strangers and dismay on the part of the friends of the school 4. Hōše' welcomed the plan, although he felt that the authorities of the school knew best what was needed for such a new legislation, and authorized them to set up the canons.

The authorization granted, the work of drafting was carried out by Narsai, Jaunān, the presbyter and the writer of the school ⁵. Certainly assistance came from other teachers.

The preamble quickly passes over the other points of which we would like to learn more, but dwells in a lengthy manner on the justification of this undertaking. Allusions are made to certain persons whose behavior and conduct have been embarrassing to the school. It is said that the school had to pass through even critical moments. Allusions also refer to some who from outside have come to their aid, aggravating the situation 6. The acuteness of these difficulties can be seen also in the statement included here, namely that everyone who does not obey and seeks for assistance

³ See page 51 ff.

⁴ See page 53 ff.

⁵ See page 60.

⁶ See page 58.

from the laymen or clergymen in the town — shall be cursed. Every one who dares to assist such persons is threatened in a similar way.

The preamble ends with the stipulation guaranteeing the preservation of these canons. Every one who dares to destroy them or alter something, will be punished with the exclusion from the mysteries of the church ⁷.

The cycle of 22 canons covers two areas with unequal attention: on the one hand, the administration; namely the $rabbait\bar{a}$ and the teachers, and on the other hand the students, which section occupies most of the space.

The cycle opens with the canons for the strengthening of the office of the *rabbaitā*, regulating his election, duties in general, and sanctions in the case of failure in meeting his obligations 8.

For the teachers there is only one canon the purpose of which is to prevent possible neglect of their duties 9.

The main part of the cycle purports to put strings on the activities of the students. This covers a variety of aspects relative to the work and life in the school: admission ¹⁰, studies ¹¹, and life ¹² and death ¹³ in the community. Associated are also some norms intended to regulate the life and activity of the students at the time of the recess ¹⁴. The largest subsection comprises disciplinary canons covering neglect and moral lapse ¹⁵, quarrel ¹⁶, and stealing ¹⁷.

- 7 See page 71 f.
- 8 Can. I: rules for election; can. II: jurisdiction in carrying out his disciplinary activity and handling financial matters and determining the norms of punishment; can. XXII: he has to pay a fine and accept expulsion.

About the qualifications of such a rabbaitā and his duties in monastic communities, see the Pseudo-Nicean canons, Sūnhādōs tibēlāitā L, 1-7, ed. Vööbus; fuller attestation of manuscript evidence, see in Les canons de Pseudo Nicée en syriaque, L, 1-7, ed. Vööbus.

9 Can. XX: reprimand and with-drawal of provisions.

- 10 Can. VII.
- 11 Can. VIII, IX.
- 12 Can. V-VI, X-XI.
- 13 Can. XVII: instructions about the validity of testaments.
- 14 Can. IV: trips to the Byzantine territory are forbidden. This is the longest canon and very explicit. It prohibits any kind of trip whether in the interest of study, religion or business, and includes norms for punishment; can V: permissible work and its regulation.
 - 15 Can. III, XV, XIX and XXI.
- 16 Can. XII-XIII; can. XVI: false accusations; can. XIX: beating.
 - 17 Can. XIV.

3. THE CANONS OF HENĀNĀ

It is a fortunate situation that we have some information also about the origin of the canons set up about a century later. At that time the directorship stood in the hands of Ḥenānā. A short preamble informs us that this took place in the 12th year of the victory of Hormizd, i.e. in the year 590 ¹⁸. Further we are told that at that time Šem'ōn was the metropolitan of Nisibis and that he sanctioned the new canons. This is the same Šem'ōn who appears in the synodical acts of the year 585 in connection with a serious schism ¹⁹. The mention of Qaššā ²⁰, a teacher, Mār Ḥenānīšō' the presbyter and Ḥūḥ the *rabbaitā* does not help us, since nothing is known about them in other sources.

This time we are permitted to look into conditions which we would particularly like to know. The preamble gives only vague allusions to the situation which necessitated this new legislation. Therefore we must turn to other sources. Here the clues are tantalizingly meagre. However, we do learn that under Ḥenānā's leadership new winds began to blow between the walls of a school which had already a tradition of venerable age. This brought the school to its élan ²¹. In view of this we may assume that such a large community of students must also have brought its problems with it. It must have been more difficult to maintain order and keep the standards. This we can deduce from the fact that the same problems remained later. In 602 the established rules were sought out and their authority was reestablished ²².

What has been surmised, finds confirmation in the allusions in the canons themselves. Occasionally they speak a little more clearly about their background situation. The mise-en-scène reflects a need for stricter discipline. Whether there were other reasons than these, we cannot find out.

The first place in the cycle is occupied by the canons for the curator of the xenodocheion. This is quite understandable, since up to now nothing had been fixed in the older canons regarding

¹⁸ See page 91.

¹⁹ Synodicon orientale, ed. Снавот, р. 163.

²⁰ See page 92.

²¹ See page 26.

²² See page 103 f.

this. In the meantime the school had made progress in adding a xenodocheion under the auspices of Abraham ²³, and it was an urgent necessity to fix some rules for the operation of this institution ²⁴.

Obviously there were needs to establish new and adequate norms for instruction, particularly in questions of admission ²⁵, in protection of the library facilities ²⁶, in regulation of the studies in medicine ²⁷ and in graduation ²⁸.

As urgent as the directives for instruction were the questions which involved the extracurricular activities of the students. Their activity during the school year and between the sessions was also the concern of the administration. This is unfolded in several regulations ²⁹.

The greater number of canons speak of need for stricter discipline and order which the increased student body made necessary. These involve matters like maintenance ³⁰, study ³¹, religious obligations ³², care for decent appearance ³³ and regulations for visiting the town ³⁴.

Finally there were some special questions which were felt important enough to be included ³⁵.

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23 BARHADBEŠABBĀ, Histoire, ed. Nau, p. 622 f.
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²⁴ Can. I.

²⁵ Can. XV.

²⁶ Can. VIII.

²⁷ Can. XIX-XX.

²⁸ Can. VII.

²⁹ Can. X: work; can. XII, XVIII: teaching.

³⁰ Can. II-IV, IX and XIV.

³¹ Can. V.

³² Can. V, XI.

³³ Can. XVII.

³⁴ Can. XIII, and XVI.

³⁵ Can. VI: regulations for the case of death; can. XXI: rules which forbid hiding of escaped prisoners and helping the slaves to escape.



PRESERVATION OF THE STATUTES

1. IN SYRIAC

The statutes of the School of Nisibis have shared the same fate as many other Syriac documents. The earliest copies have not survived. All the copies produced during the centuries after they were set up, are lost. In taking the particular character of these documents into account, this is not surprising. This is not a kind of text which has been copied and used frequently. It may be said that it is rather surprising that these canons have survived at all.

The earliest codex which remains is Ms. Alqoš syr. 169¹, which helps to lead us back into the 13th century. This is so in the best case. It might also belong to the 14th century. In any case a terrain which covers 7-8 centuries, cannot be crossed. The only compensation which we have is that all the manuscripts which are at our disposal, do not go back to the same earliest manuscript. When the manuscript tradition emerges it reveals not the same archetype but here we stand face to face with its ramifications. This is an advantage. So, in the light of the manuscripts which come from different directions, we are enabled to have a larger field of vision which gives us an idea of the past of the transmission of these documents.

Not all the codices which are at our disposal have preserved the complete text. There is one codex which offers only selected canons of both sets of the statutes. This is Ms. Ming. syr. 47 ². This recension obviously comes from a collection of the canonical sources from which the preambles were left out and the extent of the canons was reduced. Particularly the first selection reveals clearly the purpose of including the norms which positively speak of the studies, duties and obligations. This selection of the first cycle of the canons presents the following canons: I-II, V, VII-XI, XVIII, and XXII. Of the second cycle the following canons are included: I-II, XIII, XV-

¹ See page 43.

XVIII, and XXI. However the preambles are included in this manuscript.

Finally a word should be said about an epitome preserved by Ms. Par. syr. 306 ³. It is a very short epitome which includes only a limited number of canons and produces only the gist of them. From the first cycle only the following canons are included: I-II, IV, VI, IX, XII, XIV-XV, and XXI, and of the second cycle: I, XIV-XVI, and XVII.

2. IN ARABIC

The statutes of the School of Nisibis have come down to us also in an Arabic translation. This we owe to the translation of the codification work titled: Figh an-naṣrānīya 4 which among other legislative sources has also included these two cycles of the canons. The section dealing with the schools offers these texts but without the historically significant preambles.

The only real manuscript of the Figh an-naṣrānīya has been preserved without a title and colophon 5, and so all the data about the origin of this source are lost here. However, a testimony that comes from the first part of the 13th century in Ibn al-'Assāl assures us that this translation was prepared by Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib 6, a tradition that is seconded also by Abū 'l-Barakāt (d. 1363) 7.

The information about Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib comes from a number of sources the oldest of which is al-Baihaqī (d. 1169) who tells that he was a Nestorian Christian, and flourished in the first half of the 11th century as a philosopher, clergyman and physician in Baghdad ⁸. He was well known as an author of many scholarly works in various fields ⁹. He died in 1043 ¹⁰.

- 3 See page 46.
- 4 Ed. Hoenerbach et Spies, part II.
- 5 Ms. Vat. arab. 153.
- 6 Its title is quoted as: Figh annaṣārā, Nicoll, Bibliothecae Bodleianae codium mss. catalogus II, 1, p. 42.
- 7 He says that he compiled a codification work and gives its title: Figh an-naṣrānīya, see his Miṣbāḥ
- az-zilma VII, ed. RIEDEL, p. 653.
- 8 Tatimma Şiwān al-ḥikma, ed. Shafi, p. 27 ff.
- ⁹ Graf, Geschichte der arabischen Literatur, II, p. 160.
- 10 It has been postulated by RIEDEL, Kirchenrechtsquellen, p. 151 f., that the author of the Fiqh was another one with the same name who lived in the 14th century.

With regard to the character of the Arabic version of the statutes, which is earlier than the earliest Syriac manuscript at our disposal, our hopes of finding some aid here to textual criticism are disappointed. This translation partly shows reductions, partly accretions. There are also modifications and changes. As an analysis shows, most of the readings rule themselves out of court, without ado. All this gives the impression that this text is rather a recension than a translation. Thus here the outcome is the same as that which has been observed in other parts of the text of this compendium in Arabic, namely in the *Leges Constantini et Leonis* 11, the synodical canons 12, and other legislative materials 13.

However, we do not have answers to all our questions regarding the sources of all these changes. This problem becomes more complicated since Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib did not translate these materials directly from the original Syriac documents but there was a mediator between the authentic sources and the Arabic version of them — namely a codification work which was composed in Syriac. Whether this belonged, as it has been assumed ¹⁴, to Gabri'ēl, metropolitan of Bāṣrā who composed his compendium in Syriac in the second half of the 9th century, is another question ¹⁵. There is the possibility that at least one part of all these changes goes back to this Syriac Unterlage. The agglomeration of reductions, additions and modifications is what appears as a characteristic feature in the stream of tradition of such compendiums ¹⁶. Thus we have reasons to be open to the possibility that there are elements which Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib found

11 '... diesem Auszug heften vielerlei Fehler an, die aus Unkenntnis, Missverständnis oder Flüchtigkeit hervorgegangen sind. Derjenige syrische Text, welcher dem Ibn Altajjib vorlag, ist mit allen Fehlern derselbe wie die uns in der vatikanischen Kopie vorliegende, und für die Interpretation der einzelnen Gesetze gewinnt man aus seiner Übersetzung nichts, oder jedenfalls kaum mehr als einen weiteren Beitrag zur Geschichte der Irrungen', Sachau, Syrische Rechtsbücher, I, p. XIII.

12 Gyldi, Ostsyrische Bischöfe, p. 388 f.

13 Īšō
* BAR NūN, $Q\bar{a}n\bar{u}n\bar{c}$, ed. Vöö-BUS, p. 191 ff.

14 '... eine fast vollständige Übersetzung oder vielmehr wohl eine freie, kompilatorische Bearbeitung eines syrischen Rechtswerkes des nestorianischen Bischofs Gabriel von Bāṣrā', GRAF, Rechtswerk des Nestorianers Gabriel, p. 518.

15 See Vööbus, Nachrichten über das Rechtswerk des Gabriel von Başra.
16 Vööbus, Die syrischen Kanonessammlungen, II, part V.

already in the Syriac texts. In any case, in view of all this, a reading should never be accepted as an element that has a claim for authenticity unless its intrinsic quality can stand the severest test.

3. THE COMPENDIUM OF ABDISO

For the transmission of the ecclesiastical canons there is another channel. This is the work of codification ¹⁷ prepared by 'Abdīšō', metropolitan of Nisibis (d. 1318). A number of canons have escaped oblivion only through this channel ¹⁸.

It is a matter of regret that the statutes of the School of Nisibis have not been included into these legislative materials. This is not only so in the manuscript ¹⁹ edited by Assemani. Since certain manuscripts show differences occasionally ²⁰ and the codification work does include something of the rules for the school, it was necessary to examine the situation in other manuscripts.

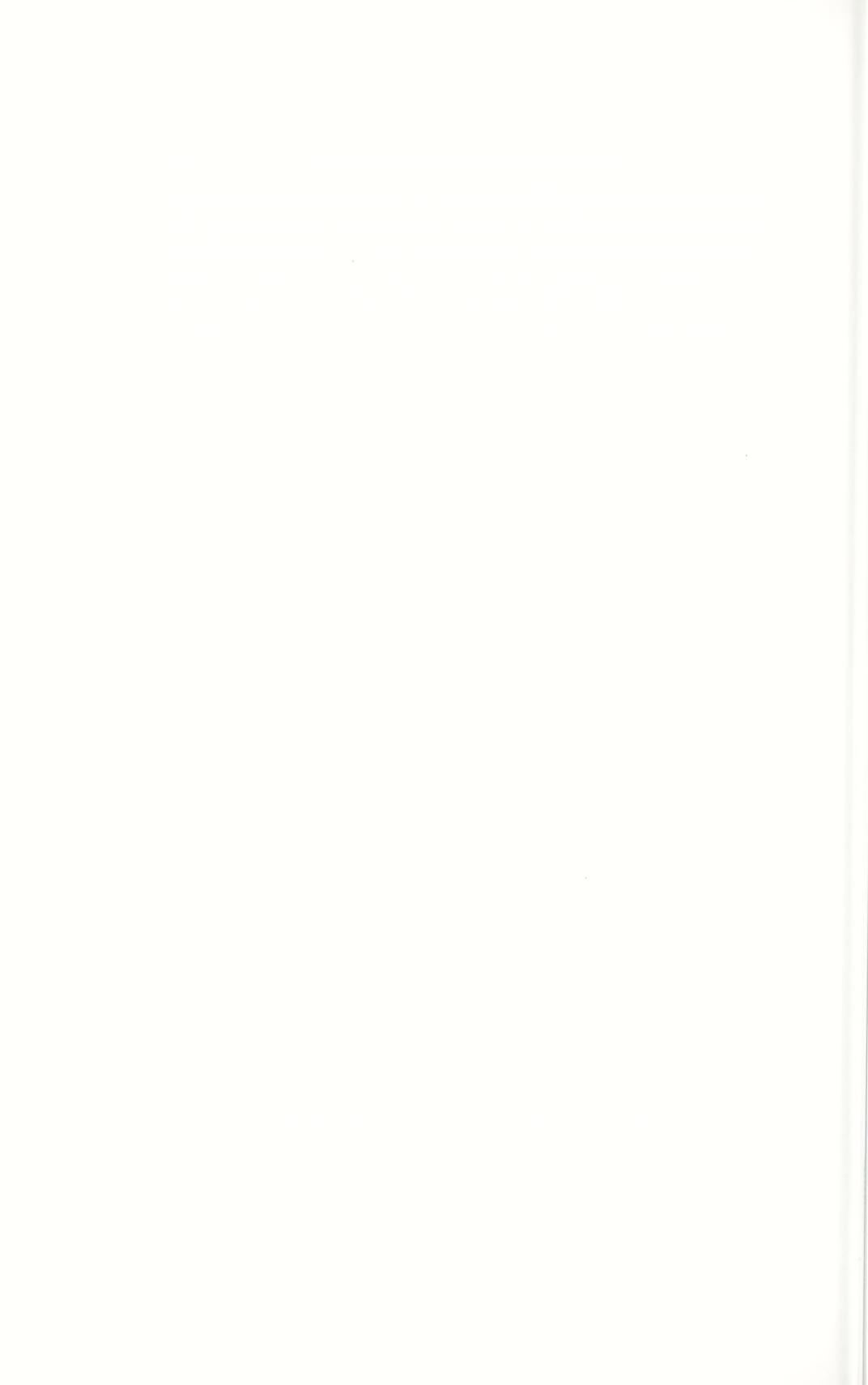
Thus a search had to be extended to all the manuscripts of the work of 'Abdīšō', which are available to us, in the hope of shedding new light on the problems created by the manner of his presentation. Manuscripts which were examined are located in the following places: in the Vatican — both the general collection ²¹ as well as that of Borgia ²² —, in Paris ²³, Berlin ²⁴, Cambridge ²⁵, London ²⁶ and Birmingham ²⁷. The search was extended also to manuscripts in the Orient. Examined were the codices found in Baghdad ²⁸, Alqoš ²⁹ and in the Monastery of Mār Gīwargī ³⁰. However, none of these reveal any knowledge of these statutes.

'Abdīšō', however, offers something else. There is a piece introduced by the title: '(the canons) of the School of Nisibis' 31. It is noteworthy that 'Abdīšō' could reproduce this piece from his source

- 17 Nomocanon, ed. ASSEMANI.
- 18 Vööbus, Die syrischen Kanonessammlungen, II, part I-II, IV.
 - 19 Ms. Vat. syr. 129.
- 20 Vööbus, Die syrischen Kanonesrammlungen, II, part V.
- ²¹ Ms. Vat. syr. 128 (1556); Ms. 355.
- ²² Ms. Mus. Borg. syr. 52 (1468); Ms. 53 (1643).
 - 23 Ms. Par. syr. 323 (1881).

- ²⁴ Ms. Berl. Sach. 120 (1714).
- 25 Ms. Cambr. Add. 2022 (17 cent.).
- ²⁶ Ms. Br. Mus. orient. 4398 (1890).
- 27 Ms. Ming. syr. 121 (1655); Ms. 246 (1913).
- ²⁸ Ms. Baghd. 401 (1564); Ms. 402 (17 cent.); Ms. Baghd. A, fol. 29 a 211 b (17 cent.).
 - ²⁹ Ms. Alqoš 175 (1893).
 - 30 Ms. Giw. A (1701).
 - 31 Nomocanon, ed. Assemani, p. 132.

without sensing any difficulty, since in the Fiqh an-naṣrānīya the same piece is introduced as a part under the general heading 'the canons of the Apostles' 32 without any reference to this particular provenance. Since there are questions which are not clear, it would be better to introduce this text and the discussion of it separately as an appendix 33.



THE MANUSCRIPTS

Ms. Alqoš 169

This is the earliest codex with the statutes which has come down to us. Already Chayyat has called attention to this manuscript 1. It is located in the Monastery of Our Lady near Alqoš, Iraq 2. It is a collection of materials of legislative nature. According to its own terminology it is: _ are real collection of the synods which our father, blessed Mār Eliiā the First, catholicos-patriarch, collected from the volumes of the blessed fathers' 3. Thus according to this testimony the collection was prepared by Catholicos Eliiā 4. This extensive collection incorporates the acts of the synods of the Western and Oriental provenance and a large number of documents of various kinds important for canon-law and ecclesiastical legislation of Eastern Syrian Christianity 5. Among these materials are also included the first 6 and the second 7 cycle of the statutes.

The claim, however, that Catholicos Eliiā was the author of this collection, cannot remain unchallenged. The fact that the earliest form of the collection of these priceless documents ended with the synodical acts under Catholicos Ḥenānīšōʻ II of the year 775 and did not include those of his followers 8, proves conclusively that the collection was arranged during Ḥenānīšōʻ's rule.

- 1 Syri orientales, p. 122.
- ² Its ancient number was Ms. 90.
- 3 This is the text that appears at the end of the manuscript, cah. 42, fol. 5 b.
- 4 He ruled from 1028 till 1049, cf. BAR EBRĀIĀ, Chronicon ecclesiasticum, ed. Abbeloos et Lamy, II, col. 275 ff.
- 5 About its content see Vosté, Catalogue, p. 63 ff.
 - 'Tout ce que contient ce volume im-
- posant se rapporte à la foi ou à la discipline de l'Église, et émane soit des Conciles, soit des Pères de l'Église ou des Patriarches d'Orient. Nombreuses et variées les matières qui y sont traitées', ibid. p. 63.
 - 6 Cah. 17, fol. 20 a cah. 18, fol. 6 b.
 - 7 Cah. 18, fol. 6 b 9 a.
- 8 About these documents, see Vööbus, Die syrischen Kanonessammlungen, II, part I.

The codex has no colophon about its date, since it bears the signs of the vicissitudes of time and has suffered particularly at the beginning and at the end⁸. However palaeographically the character of the script can be placed into the 13th or the 14th century⁹.

This is the codex which is the basis for the edition (A).

Ms. Mus. Borg. syr. 82

This codex ¹⁰ is a collection of the acts of the synods and other cognate documents ¹¹. It also includes the statutes, the first ¹² and the second cycle ¹³.

The manuscript displays many lacunae in places where the copist could not decipher the text in the Vorlage.

The manuscript is a recent copy written before the year 1869 when the Chorepiscopus David brought it from Mossul to Rome.

This text which appears in the critical apparatus as B, was edited by Guidi ¹⁴. Unfortunately a number of typographical errors have escaped the correcting eye in this text edition.

Ms. Vat. syr. 599

The collection of legislative sources has also embedded the first 15 and the second 16 cycle of the statutes.

The codex includes a colophon ¹⁷, which informs us about the time and place of its origin: 'this book was written in the village of Alqoš in the land of Mossul, in the year 1871 of the Messiah'.

This text appears in the critical apparatus as C.

- 8 There was even the need to supplement one part of it, namely the history and the canons of the council of Nicaea.
- ⁹ See also Scher, Notice sur les manuscrits, p. 58.
- 10 Scher, Notice sur les manuscrits, p. 268.
- Der Copist... liess statt der zahlreichen ihm unleserlich gewordenen Stellen entsprechende Lücken. Anfang und Schluss fehlen. Auch ist die Abschrift ebenso incorrect als kalligraphisch schön und zwingt zu zahlrei-
- chen Correcturen', BRAUN, Buch der Synhados, p. 3 f.
- 11 Regarding the description of its content see Cersov, Manuscrits orientaux, p. 365 ff; about a fuller description of it, see Chabot, Synodicon orientale, p. 2 ff.
 - 12 Fol. 351 b 358 a.
 - 13 Fol. 358 a 360 b.
- ¹⁴ Gli statuti della scuola di Nisibi, p. 169 ff.
 - 15 Fol. 87 a 95 a.
 - 16 Fol. 95 a 97 b.
 - 17 Fol. 305 a.

Ms. Br. Mus. orient. 9386

In this codex of similar content, in the second part of it, which has its independent pagination, there also appears the first ¹⁸ and the second cycle ¹⁹ of the statutes.

The text reveals lacunae which indicate that its Vorlage was already defective.

The codex is of recent hand. According to the colophon ²⁰ this part of the manuscript was copied in the village of Tell Kephā by Pheranses bar Šamō, in the year 1890. It was later acquired by the British Museum. However, it does not appear in the supplement of the catalogue of manuscripts ²¹.

This manuscript appears in the critical apparatus as D.

Ms. Ming. syr. 47

This codex of similar content is located in the Selly Oak Colleges near Birmingham ²². Among the legislative documents the first ²³ and the second cycle ²⁴ of the statutes have also been embedded. However, the complete text of both cycles has not been included, but only selected parts of it. Thus, this witness as far as the statutes are concerned, is an abridgement ²⁵.

The manuscript is of recent hand. It provides us with no accurate information about its origin. However, the last piece ²⁶ of text which the manuscript includes is a chronology of various events that took place in the Orient from 1049 A.G. till 1921 A.D. ²⁷. Judging from this text the codex must be later than the date just quoted.

In the textual apparatus this manuscript bears the designation E.

¹⁸ Fol. 83 b - 89 a.

¹⁹ Fol. 89 a - 94 a.

²⁰ Fol. 289 b.

²¹ This manuscript does not appear in *Margoliouth*, *Descriptive List* which ends with Ms. Br. Mus. orient. 5463.

²² MINGANA, Catalogue, I, col. 121-133.

^{&#}x27;Synods of the East Syrian Church

and other tracts... Written in a clear and handsome East Syrian hand. Fully vowelled. Profusely rubricated', *ibid.*, col. 121, 133.

²³ Fol. 156 b - 162 b.

²⁴ Fol. 162 b - 163 b.

²⁵ See page 37.

²⁶ Fol. 268 a - 268 b.

²⁷ MINGANA, Catalogue, I, col. 133.

Ms. Ming. syr. 586

This codex, also located in the Selly Oak Colleges near Birmingham ²⁸, is the first volume of an extensive collection of legislative materials, which include also the first ²⁹ and the second cycle ³⁰ of the statutes.

The codex is of recent origin. This time we are furnished with exact data of its genesis. The colophon at the end of the manuscript ³¹ informs that it was copied in the year 1932 in the village of Alqoš. It was copied through the Deacon Mattai bar Paulos. Further we are informed that the manuscript was copied in the Monastery of Our Lady near Alqoš ³².

The siglum of this manuscript for the textual apparatus is F.

Ms. Par syr. 306

This is a manuscript which has included various texts of legislative character ³³. Here also a cycle of the statutes has been used ³⁴. This, however, is but a short epitome which leaves out other texts of historical character and includes only a limited number of canons ³⁵. Using the canons this epitome produces a gist of them. This is what the compilator has also done with other material of similar nature ³⁶.

The codex was written in the year 1889 37.

Ms. Seert 65

Finally some words should be mentioned about the codex which according to its age was the second to the earliest one. Although it does not exist any more and along with other unique documents has fallen victim to the fury of devastation in Turkey, it still

- 28 'An extensive collection of Synodical Acts and Canons according to the East Syrian Church', *ibid.*, col. 1109 f.
 - 29 Fol. 373 b 379 a.
 - 30 Fol. 379 a 382 b.
 - 31 Fol. 462 a.
- 32 Mingana, Catalogue, I, col. 1109 f.,1116.
 - 33 Chabot, Notices sur les manus-

- crits, p. 254; see also Nau, Notices des manuscrits, p. 280.
 - 34 Fol. 111 b.
 - 35 See page 38.
- 36 Namely in the canons established by Abraham of Kaškar and Dadīšōs of Bēt Dārāie for the community in the Monastery of Īzlā, see Syriac and Arabic Documents, ed. Vööbus, p. 151, 164.

deserves to be mentioned since this codex has certainly become a source of the variants in the textual transmission of the statutes.

- Already Chayyat has called attention to this codex ³⁸. A brief description of its content is provided by Scher ³⁹. It was a copy of a defective codex ⁴⁰. From the description it is not clear ⁴¹ but most probably the manuscript included both cycles of the statutes.

The manuscript did not contain any definite information about the date and place of writing, but its script placed the codex into the 17th or 18th century 42.

dans le corps du livre qui paraît être copié sur un ouvrage antérieure, luimême incomplet', *ibid.*, p. 48.

³⁷ Fol. 34 b. Further the colophon states that the manuscript was copied by 'Abd al-Aziz.

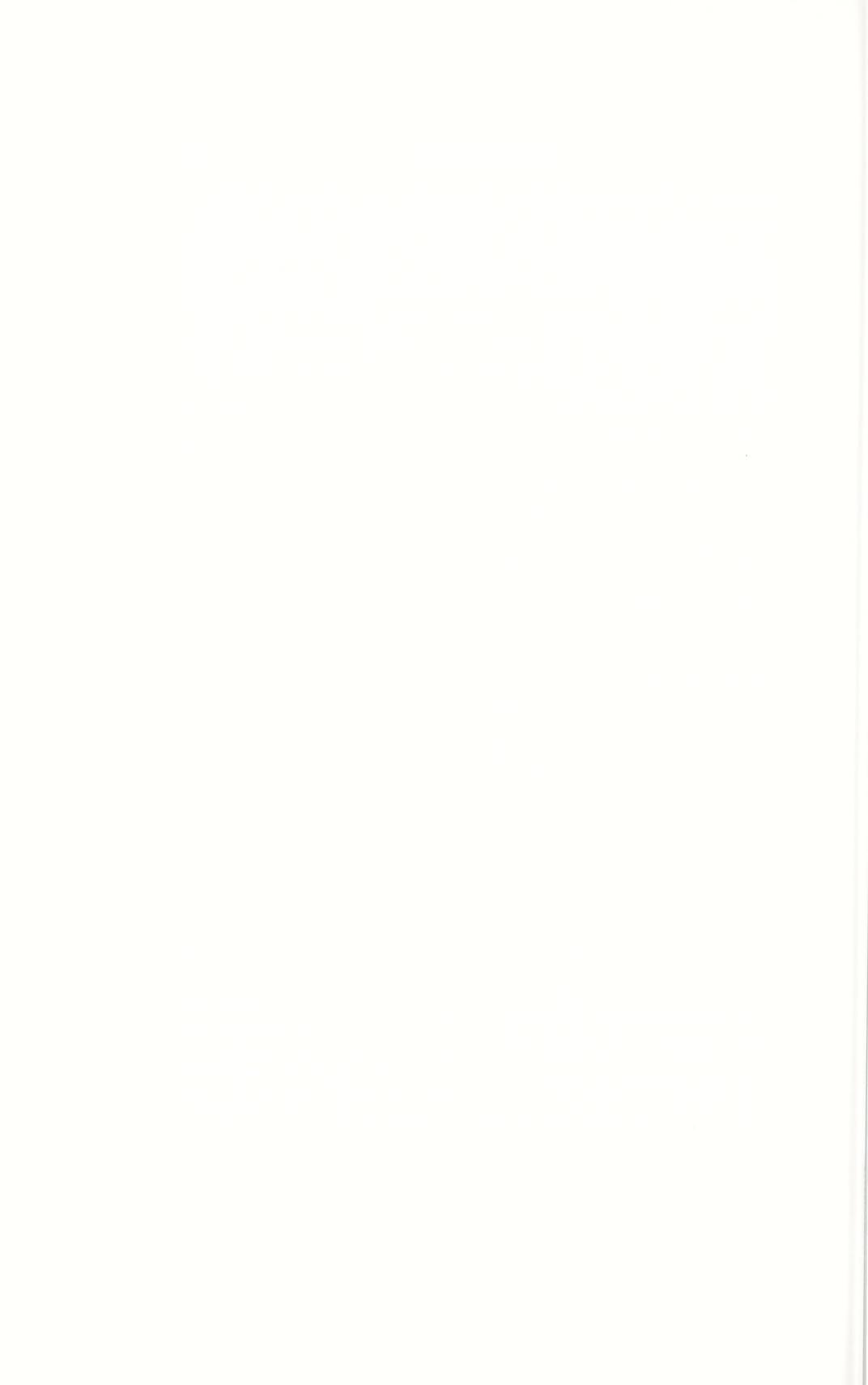
³⁸ Syri orientales, p. 122.

³⁹ Catalogue, p. 48 ff.

^{40 &#}x27;Il y a, en outre, des lacunes

^{41 &#}x27;XVI°. Règles et statuts de l'École de Nisibe', *ibid.*, p. 50.

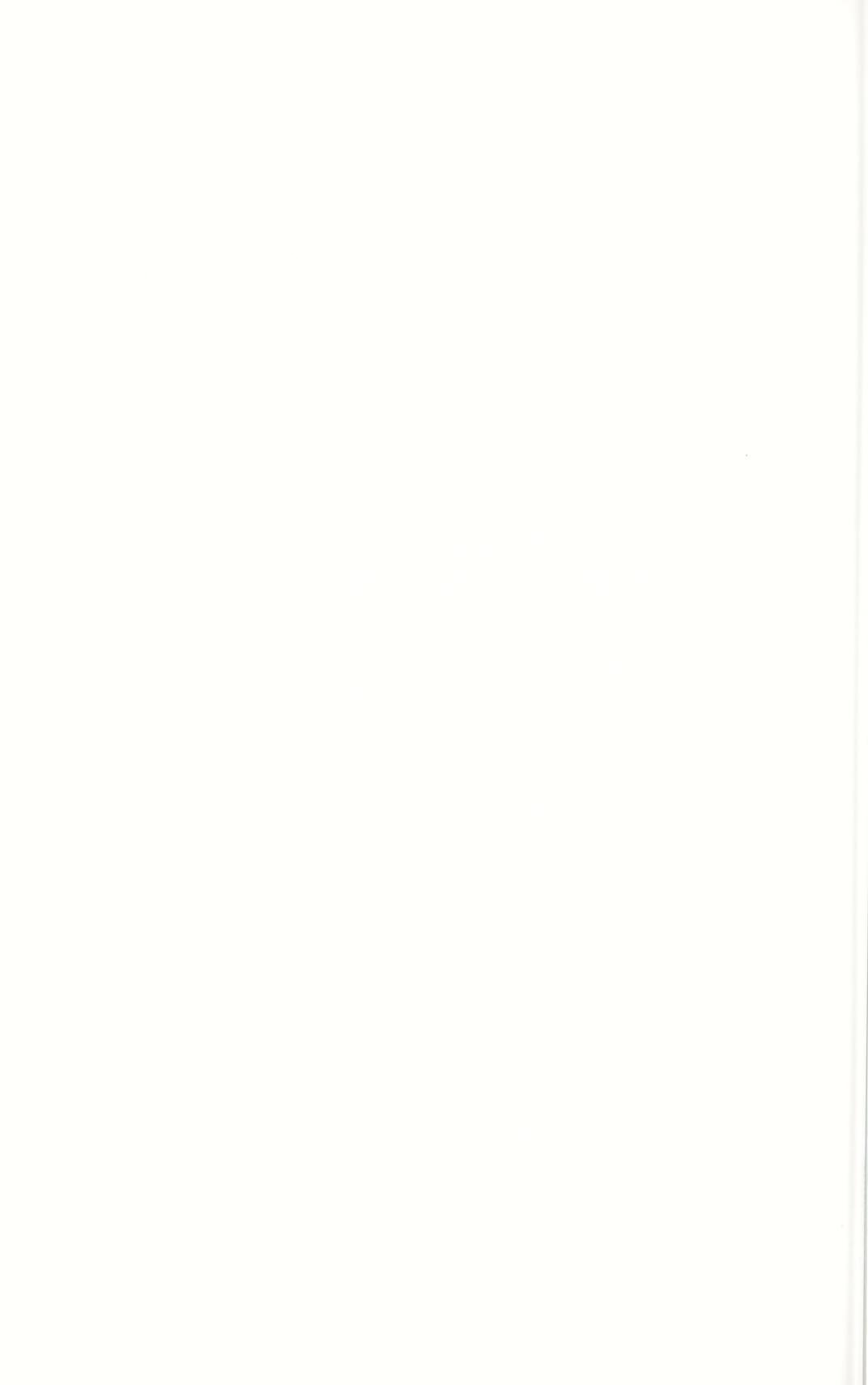
⁴² Ibid., p. 51.



PART II

מנגט האשבה הלמשהיה האשבה הלמשה.

THE CANONS
OF THE HOLY SCHOOL OF THE TOWN OF NISIBIS



[عنهمت

1 wind DEF — 2 Kharinana B — 3 purk B

[PROEM]

In the month of 'Ilūl¹ of the thirteenth year of the victory² of our gracious and beneficient³ lord Khosrau, king of kings, preserved and protected⁴ through the grace that is from heaven, giving peace to the world, victorious until eternity; (and) under the direction of the elect friend of God, blessed father Mār Aḥādeābūhi⁵, the bishop — metropolitan of Nisibis, — we, the prin-

- 1 According to the Syrians the twelfth month, answering to most of September and part of October.
- ² This is a reference to the events of the year 590 which brought Khosrau Parvez to the throne, cf. Christensen, L'Iran, p. 444. According to the calculation given in our document the year is 602 A.D.
 - 3 Christians had many reasons to
- use such epithets. In his liberality Khosrau Parvez favored Christians and made contributions to the ecclesiastical institutions. See footnote 3, page 103.
 - 4 This seems to be a formula.
- 5 Nothing is known about him in other sources nor can a definite date be assigned to his rule, see footnote 13, page 105.

العدنى حف دارى العدقه مهدى المسلم ما دارى من دارى من المسلم مهدى المسلم المحده المدهم المحده المدهم المدهم

4 απμφηνία BE, lacuna D — 5 lacuna ABCD γιάς, F κόμιπου Ε — 6 , το D

cipal ⁶ and $b\bar{a}d\bar{u}q\bar{e}$ ⁷ brothers, together with the $maqrei\bar{a}n\bar{e}$ ⁸ and the $rabbait\bar{a}$ ⁹ and $mehagei\bar{a}n\bar{a}$ ¹⁰ of the community of those who dwell in Nisibis, whose names are written beneath — we all have approached in one agreement and have asked ¹¹ the fatherhood of Mār metropolitan to the effect that he [may order] that these first canons which were set up and decreed by the holy teachers and the blessed fathers and the $medabr\bar{a}n\bar{e}$ ¹² of the church, who were the founders of this community, should be searched anew, reissued

'obvious', 'clearly known', and 'prominent'.

reacher'. This function seems to have covered a variety of fields outside the elementary instruction and exegesis. One such $bad\bar{u}q\bar{a}$ in the School of Nisibis composed a liturgico-historical work, cf. Ms. Ming. syr. 195, fol. 25 a. These functions seem to have embraced also instruction in non-theological areas. One such $bad\bar{u}q\bar{a}$, Mīka'ēl, composed for instance philosophical works, cf. Ms. Br. Mus. or. 4071, fol. 45 b; Ms. Vat. syr. 618, fol. 116 b. It seems that this function included disciplines

like history, geography and astronomy.

8 See footnote 41, page 83.

9 The term means 'a head of the house' i.e. 'steward', 'manager' or 'oeconom'. About the qualifications of such a rabbaitā and his duties in monastic communities, see the so-called canons of Marūtā, Sūnhādōs tibēlāitā L, 1-7, ed. Vööbus, p. 130 f. In the School of Nisibis, the rabbaitā was the director of the discipline and also the librarian, see canon XIV, page 81.

10 See footnote 42, page 83.

11 Lit. 'persuaded'.

12 'Leaders' or 'rulers'. In the ecclesiastical terminology it is used for bishops and abbots.

reservible error or the the property of a first that chara or the property of the property of

 7 מצישל ארכי 2 באני מציאל באכי 2 מאפיל ב 2 מאפיל בארכי באיז ב 2 מאפיל באיז ב 2

and established in our community. The spiritual gain that is to be expected for those that accomplish them, shall now also those possess who are being directed by them. But particularly we were prepared to come to this petition and supplication through the evil operation of the Satan and through the multitude of the sins of the community 13 in these hard and evil times which have happened to us — so that (all) in like manner were sifted in a sieve, and the true brothers were not recognized from the false ones. And the canons became disordered, the laws trodden underfoot, the eternal qeiāmā 14 which they had established, was brought to nought, and the first boundaries which the spiritual fathers had established in their heritage, were changed 15. But even these canons — which were set up, and which have shown to us the way of the light, and the path of life, and which hindered and restrained the slothful and encouraged and stimulated the diligent ones — were concealed and hidden by the evil propensity of the insolent ones. These were

¹³ The word used here is cal 'the inside' or 'inner part', metaphorically a body of people in the sense of community.

¹⁴ This term means 'covenant' but can mean also 'oath' and 'vow', Neṣḥānā, ed. Bedjan, p. 579; Legends,

ed. Wensinck I, p. 9. About the importance of the $qei\bar{a}m\bar{a}$ and its role in Syrian Christianity, see Vööbus, Institution of the benai $qei\bar{a}m\bar{a}$, p. 19 ff., and History of Asceticism I, p. 97 ff.

¹⁵ Cf. Proverbs XXII, 28.

10 べかれんいつ B — 11 lacuna B, へんしゅんは F, んしゅんは D — 12 べいごは BDEF

sought for and not found. Therefore the mind of the prudent 16 ones was moved to seek wisely and to search carefully 17 for the copy of these canons which formerly existed in this community. (Thus) let it be searched for, made known, and come to the midst, and (then) it shall be sanctioned by the signatures and by the seals and be placed in the archive 18 of the school; and it shall be read year after year as the previous custom was, for the stimulation of the virtues and for the shame of the greedy and the idle ones 19, those who in this time use by deception the usurped 20 and false name, as they are clothed in the 'eskīmā 21 of scholarship and of the love of learning, (but) are far from its power, (since) they are drawn after the worldly business and impure profits, and the good name, which we have learned, they defile through the increase of (bitter) tears and through the accumulation of money. And through lightminded 22 persons who had set themselves apart for an empty and unprofitable service that is foreign to our 'eskīmā 23, our community was despised

¹⁶ The term **Krois** means 'discerning', 'capable of discernment'. It has a peculiar flavor as an ancient monastic term, see Vööbus, *Zur Terminologie*.

¹⁷ Lit. 'clearly'.

public library, the archives.

¹⁹ Or 'the empty ones'.

²⁰ Lit. 'borrowed'.

 $^{^{21}}$ יeskim $\bar{a}=\sigma\chi\tilde{\eta}\mu a,$ monastic dress.

²² Lit. 'thin', 'easy'.

²³ See footnote 21.

PROEM 55

محدين ماسامعا معنعه مدنعه سابه ماساره مومرته or Ly orbi - renei, haces, ny fer ensy on husery 13 לא כשניא הבדבו הבישא מהא לא

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13 zaudra E — 14 .xua B — 15 .xi B, .xi= CD, .xi E — 16 lacuna B, Khamis CD, Khamis E — 17 znaa F, 4 zna lacuna B — 18 lacuna B — 19 lacuna B

and we have been reviled by the members of our own household and the outsiders that dwell in this town.

And matters like these — as our father Mār metropolitan heard and learned, he suffered with us, was grieved because of us, like the brain that is over the body that suffers by the feebleness of sickness of the members in the body, and he ordered us to search diligently for the copies of these previous canons which were set forth and established from the beginning by the Bishop-Metropolitan Mār Hōše²⁴, (a man of) good remembrance, and Mār Narsai 25, presbyter and teacher, and by the approval 26 of them by the teachers and brothers who after that time were in this community, through the action (of the fathers) of pious remembrance, Mār

Elîša bar Qūzbāiē, the second director of the School of Nisibis, by CHABOT, L'école de Nisibe, p. 51; cf. also Littérature syriaque, p. 51; TIXERONT, Précis de patrologie, p. 424. This is an obvious mistake. This is the more understandable since

24 Hōše has been mixed up with paleographically there is a great similarity between both names in the Syriac script. And since the place of activity was the same for both men, namely Nisibis, such a confusion is no surprise.

²⁵ See page 21 ff. 26 Lit. 'agreement'.

min. exertindon, tumi, tocity ci, os entro herannen certifentia osity cei, neima osity nellet, oboach tolich time certifoda tum certifoda tum certifoda cin certifoda cei, seen neima certifoda on certifoda c

شمری مورد با محلم مصدم معدد ماده می الان مورد مرد ماده می مورد می مورد

²⁰ кідима – , ім от. D — ²¹ кимда С — ²² от. В

Paulos ²⁷, bishop-metropolitan, and the excellent Mār Abraham ²⁸, presbyter and teacher. (Also) the addition of the other canons, which (were fixed) under the direction of Mār Šem'ōn ²⁹, bishop-metropolitan — whose soul is in rest — these which were set up during (the office of) the instruction of Denḥā ³⁰ of Ḥedaiab.

According to the command which we received, we searched and found a copy of these previous canons which had been established in this community.

The purpose and the time of their setting up was this: in the month of $Te\check{s}r\bar{\imath}$ $qad\bar{\imath}m^{31}$ of the year 808 according to the Greeks ³², that is according to the Persians the ninth year of Qawad ³³, the king of kings, on the twenty first of this month, the community of the oriental brothers, who now dwell in Nisibis, the town of the Persians, came before the holy and God-loving Mār Hōše', bishop of Nisibis and said: 'as through the envy of Satan — that one

²⁷ See footnote 3, page 86.

²⁸ See page 23 ff.

²⁹ See footnote 4, page 92.

³⁰ The name Denhā must be a

mistake for Henānā.

³¹ Tešrī I is October.

^{32 496} A.D.

³³ Qawad ruled from 488 till 531.

PROEM 57

23 المناهم 24 المناهم 24 المناهم 25 ما 25 المناهم 25

who is accustomed to disturb the peace of the believers through people who accomplish his will in order that his wickedness may not be accused and his fraud exposed by the teaching of the true ones — through that one that held power (over) the church in tyranny and was a deceitful worker, a rabid dog and a doctor of falsehood, under a pretext that does not deserve to be investigated (here), this community of the school was expelled ³⁴ from the town of Edessa and driven away. Under this circumstance it arrived at this faithful town of Nisibis. And further in Nisibis it was received by the God-loving Mār Barṣaumā ³⁵, worthy of good remembrance, the bishop before you. He showed much care about it through the beautiful canons ³⁶ which he set up for them in order that they would be guided through these without disobedience and disorder.

ed. Assemani p. 353 is wrong when he tells of the return of Barşaumā as a result of the expulsion in the year 489, Barşaumā must have returned much earlier for he was already bishop of Nisibis before Narsai arrived there. The information in Ms. Vat. syr. 67, fol. 43 a and Ms. Vat. syr. 520, fol. 41 b, that Barşaumā became a bishop already in 435 is not trustworthy.

36 This text is the only source about the existence of these canons.

Regarding the date the sources are divided. According to the Chronicle of Arbēl this has taken place after the death of Hībā, i.e. in 457, cf. Sources syriaques, ed. Mingana, p. 70. According to other sources this took place in 489: Šem'ōn of Bēt Aršam, Epistola, ed. Assemani, p. 353; Barhadbešabbā, Histoire, ed. Nau, p. 599 ff.; Mari, De patriarchis nest., ed. Gismondi, p. 44.

³⁵ ŠEM'ON OF BET ARSAM, Epistola,

26 add. KILOLAT E - 27 KDIAK CEF - 28 JA F

Also the whole community in one accord consented to the canons which Mār Barṣaumā the bishop set up for them. They did this even in writing and confirmed (them) by their signatures. In these canons, as much as possible we have walked up to now — some of us through the compulsion of necessity and some of us with good will. And because after the departure ³⁷ of the holy Mār Barṣaumā the bishop, some of the brothers, who in their will were guided by those that are not proper, became estranged to the purpose of our community as they thought that they become free from the law of censure and from the force of punishment. While, indeed, this was done so by the lightminded ³⁸ ones, it became a matter of abuse for the entire community, and gave an opportunity for the outsiders to become offended and for the insiders to be blamed. With the confidence in your kindness ³⁹ we have approached (you) and make

³⁷ The year of Barşaumā's death is not known. It seems that his successor Hōše' in 496 could look back on a number of years in his office.

³⁸ Literally the word means 'thin'

or 'easy'.

³⁹ The term means 'sweetness'. About its role in the earliest Syrian terminology, see Vööbus, Original-sprache der Oden Salomos, p. 283 f.

PROEM 59

²⁹ Кійрада В — ³⁰ от. D — ³¹ Кіаджил CDEF — ³² Кійда ВСDEF

known before you, that, so as it seems to your insight, you would order 40 about these (matters), and through your order the laws, orders and canons should be set up in this community as they become confirmed by your signature and your seal. And also we consent and confirm it through our signatures that in this way this community shall be established through study and teaching of the divine books, and through the firm and beautiful name (so that) it shall not be scattered and its honor reviled'.

The holy and God-loving Mār Hōše', the bishop, however, when he heard these (things) from the brothers of the school, he praised and exalted the ardent and the firm ones among them, and he rebuked and admonished the weak and the feeble ones through those (words) which are fitting, and he said to everyone of the community 41: 'Since, indeed, you yourselves have such a good zeal about the stability and the beautiful name, and have shown all this care about the correction of your community, no other man shall be a

⁴⁰ Lit. 'to issue', 'to proceed 41 The word used here means 'the inforth'. side', metaphorically 'a body of people'.

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lawgiver to you except you yourselves. Go and in the presence of the pious Mār Narsai, presbyter and teacher, and Mār Jaunān, persbyter and sāperā ⁴² of the school, set up for you all the beautiful laws which you deem (good) ⁴³, and put (them) expressly in writing that your goodness may be without pressure ⁴⁴, but seal and confirm them through your will and your signature. And also I and my elerics consent and confirm them through the signature and seals'.

But the brothers of the school according to the authorisation that they had received from the excellent Mār Hōše', bishop, gathered unanimously and in the presence of the pious Mār Narsai, presbyter and teacher, and Mār Jaunān, the sāperā 45 of the school, made these (pieces of) writings in which there are the excellent and sublime teachings. The purpose of the giving of the laws and the commandments which were given, was for the prudent ones 46 in the

⁴² The word means 'writer' but here it obviously means a 'teacher of writing'. Hardly can its meaning be here 'a clerk'.

⁴³ Lit. 'as it appears to you'.

⁴⁴ Lit. 'force'.

⁴⁵ See footnote 42.

⁴⁶ Or 'rational ones'.

90

magnitude of the wisdom of one good and merciful God: (namely) how through the excellence of the knowledge of our Creator He restores ⁴⁷ our nature (so) that it becomes able to receive and absorb ⁴⁸ these (things) necessary for its instruction and correction of its reason according to the preparation of its will; and (how) His love was poured out for every generation of men, He has shown from the beginning through the voice which He allowed to be heard in time, His handiwork, and here and there through His care and providence that is over us, either through the giving of the commandments and laws or through the rest of His good deeds, which are towards us.

But the foundation of the instruction is the fact that the mortal nature as long as it is in mortality, is in need of study and instruction and does not possess (by) nature the knowledge of the manner of life of immortal life as they hold back the passions of the mortality from the preparation of his 49 will and expectation of his hope, as becoming tired 50 towards (that) entice-

⁴⁷ Or 'establishes'.

⁴⁸ Lit. 'to grow'.

⁴⁹ I.e. man's will.

⁵⁰ Lit. 'drudged'.

41 Kohasis B

ment which in him more than the Enemy outside of him, is stimulating its mind ⁵¹ to go after the aberration of the lusts which are not proper for his freedom.

Therefore he needs admonition, and correction is required for him and discipline is a profit for him, that awake him and incite him so that he would not neglect and cease from the service of his life. For a capable worker is a rational and intelligent nature if he wills to study in the craft of reason. And although the free will 52 is placed between good and evil, the love for good that is in him compels him if he is willing, and (so) he hates and throws away the evil as evil, and he cherishes and loves the good as the good. And his mind is to him a furnace of trial in which he tries the beautiful and hateful manners. Then, in this distinguishing mind 53 that makes himself wise and praises his Creator, also we, the Christian community of the brothers, that are gathered in the house of instruction in the town of Nisibis, and are occupied with study and instruction of the divine books, — wish to demonstrate

⁵¹ Or 'conscience'.

pology of Theodore.

⁵² See Vööbus, Theological Anthro-

⁵³ Or 'consciousness'.

 42 منے تھ 42 منے تھ 43 ہیں 44 ہیں 45 45 add. منے تھ میں مع جب میں 46 ہیں 46 ہیں 45 45 45 45 45 45 46 46 46 45 4

the power of discernment that has been planted in our nature, through the care and diligence regarding the chaste discipline of our life as we think the thought that is fitting and right for our name and our teaching. And further we have awakened and stimulated our conscience 54 to be anxious about these (things) that are necessary and required for the true purpose of our calling, as we are convinced that the suffering-causing passions all the time accompany us, these which confuse the conscience 55, weaken it for the services of the good things as they lead astray and lead us after the aberration of the shameful desires, and pillage 56 us more than the robbers, and take from us the possession of the fear of God. Further, the fear of these (things) which continue to harm us every day, has terrified us and terrifies us that the weight of the negligence would not mark 57 us as in sleep, and we would stay behind and cease from the service of love for the occupation with spiritual (values) — that one which we have chosen through the

⁵⁴ Or 'intellect'.

⁵⁶ Lit. 'take spoil'.

⁵⁵ Or 'intellect'.

⁵⁷ Lit. 'stopped'.

power of our free will — inasmuch as we have learned through experience that the negligence of admonition and the correction of our offences has maimed us often. And this experience is (something) that makes us wise, calls into remembrance, and teaches us to depict the picture of our negligence before the sight of our conscience ⁵⁸, so that we [see] ourselves in the mirror of the distinguishing mind. For the conscious mind is accustomed to instruct ⁵⁹ itself about these (matters) that are necessary for its apprehension. As, then, we possess understanding such as this, it is right for us that we should show openly the power of the distinction that is in us and manifest the cause of our writings in the sight of everyone, that the purpose of our will shall be manifest and open for those who are prepared to walk on the road of our occupation.

As we thus occupied ourselves with this profitable occupation and continued in the study of the spiritual words which make us wise regarding the manner of life of this temporal world and regarding

⁵⁸ Or 'intellect'.

54 lacuna A, La BCE, Kala DF — 55 lacuna B — 56 lacuna B

that of the eternal, there came upon us a gust of a bad whirlwind like that (which came) upon blessed Paul in the midst of the sea 60 which also is called the one of the envy and of quarrel, and it disturbed the peace of our conscience 61 through haughty and deceitful men whose conscience 62 of their deceit was concealed in them in the likeness to the rocks which are hidden in the sea and on which the carefree 63 ships unexpectedly are fractured. But more than hard rocks, these envious and haughty ones in their quarrels have stricken the ship of our community until the (whole) structure of our conscience 64 was close (to the point) of becoming dissolved. And then suddenly and unexpectedly that voice has inspirited us that has inspirited the disciples in the midst of the sea. And although these haughty ones in the mind of their hearts see our Savior manifestly, they have not ceased and abstained from their contention but in their perturbation are similar to a wild animal, and bait and kick one another like senseless ones and run around the town

⁶⁰ Cf. Acts XXVII, 14.

⁶¹ Or 'mind'.

⁶² Or 'mind'.

⁶³ Lit. 'tranquil', 'calm', 'undis-

turbed'.

⁶⁴ Or 'mind'.

محموله لستدی کی دلتای میمونه دنده دنده کی کفر کی حفر کی میموده مودنی دستیمه کی کی حلتی میمود کا در کار کار میمونی میران میرا

57 Klo E — 58 KNAK B

howling like dogs, and like those without hope they have abandoned ⁶⁵ and have cut off the hope of their life, and they have erased from their mind the power of nature and of the Scriptures—on that account envious men, bitter in soul, that are like to these, have become helpers and auxiliaries for them. And they have helped and supported the evil with all their power and have thrown away and have rejected the good from all their soul.

And when we saw that there was none to support and no one to help, and no one to rebuke nor to correct, and no one to tame the impetuosity of the wildness through the word (then) we turned away and abstained also from the vengeance of the quarrels 66 of these insolent ones — as we have seen what the blessed Moses did regarding that company of these of the coterie of Korah 67 as he left judgement of their insolence to the Judge of righteousness — therefore we, too, have trod and are treading on that path

⁶⁵ Lit. 'enfeebled'. NAU, p. 614 f.

⁶⁶ Cf. Barhadbesabba, Histoire, ed. 67 Cf. Numeri XVI, 5 ff.

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of humility, on which trod that Humble one, and we have given the judgement regarding the vengeance of these quarrelsome ones that are found among us, to the Messiah, the righteous judge of all the reasonable ones. With regard to this which we have done in writing we have not made mention of their insolence beyond the purpose of the Scriptures. Moreover, we have trodden on the direct path of their words, and we have learned from them that continue to narrate the foolishness of the foolish ones and plait a wreath of praise for the diligent ones as they are convinced that the threat frightens the bad ones and the praise inspirits the good ones. In this respect in their books the image of the memory of the good and bad ones is depicted. There was also among us a memory in writings, admonishing about the service of the good ones, and enlightening the occupation of the bad ones. But it has perished and was destroyed by men envious of excellencies 68. And there it happened also to us what happened to the book of the blessed Jeremiah the Prophet 69: when the wicked King Jehoiakim was not able to endure the hardness of the sentences of the prophecy, the insolent one was daring and

⁶⁸ Or 'good things'.

⁶⁹ Cf. Jeremiah XXXVI, 23.

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63 direction BCDE - 64 Klipada BC - 65 mlaus D

burned them in fire; then the prophet was ordered by God who had given it, that he should return and make his prophecy a second time for the reproof of the king and for the accusation of the people 70. Something like this, therefore, also we have done in remembrance of our writings — since the first ones were forgotten in the manner of the words of the prophet, we wished to renew the same ones differently. But (by) this 'differently' we assert to make a remembrance of them, not contrary to their purpose that has been lost 71. But as the first ones were confirmed through the witnesses of mortal men, and were sealed by the seals of clay of the earth, now, instead of the witnesses of the mortals and the brittle 72 seals of clay, we confirm them through the three holy names of the substance without beginning: the Father and the Son and the Spirit of Holiness, as we are entrusting our life and our writings to these holy names and to (that) of the mediation of our beginning 73. And according to the will of our Creator and our

⁷⁰ Cf. Jeremiah XXXVI, 29 ff.

⁷¹ Lit. 'corrupted'.

⁷² Meḥablānā means more exactly 'destroying', 'corrupting'.

as 'first fruit', cf. I Corinthians XV, 23: Kars Kan Kari'the Messiah the first fruits'.

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66 Kuk E

Renewer we have set up among us also the canons which are profitable and necessary for our correction from this day and on. Everyone of us who becomes a cause for quarrel or strife, and disturbs and annoys the community of his brothers through false pretexts, and then is punished because of his follies, and (then) takes refuge with the men or women or the seculars or the clerics of the town or even seeks somebody as advocate 74, except the community to which he belongs, and does not obey the words and the correction offered to him by the whole community of his brothers—this one shall be anathematized from the fellowship of the Messiah, and from the intercourse with the true believers, not by us or by our word, but through the word of the Messiah Himself—that one who has given this authority to the mortals 75. And further is anathematized through this word, ruling over every man or woman from whatever class 76, who arises and aids the insolent

⁷⁴ The word also means 'an intercessor'.

⁷⁵ Cf. Matthew XVIII, 17-18.

⁷⁶ κως $tagm\bar{a} \equiv \tau \acute{a} γ μ α$.

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67 om. CD — 68 Kals BCDEF

will of one such who was the cause 77 for the community, (namely) he who in his person is not the quarrelsome one but an auxiliary and helper to the insolent and the quarrelsome ones. This, too, shall be included in this anathema, and he, too, shall be driven out from the community of his brothers according to what is due to his foolishness, according to the word of the Scripture 78. But these we have set down in our writings not as the shutting of the doors of repentance in front of the offenders, and not as rejoicing about the perdition and shame of their companions, but as these who apprehend the true purpose of the divine books, those which continue to tell perpetually about the judgement of the offenders, and cut them off as sick and incurable members from the community of the true ones, and show the image of their viciousness to all who see. Thus we, too, according to the purpose of the holy Scriptures, endeavor to depict in our writings the image of the names of these quarrelsome ones who became for

⁷⁷ Here the text has suffered.

⁷⁸ Cf. Matthew XVIII, 17-18.

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us an occasion for these writings, which we have disregarded and namely for the reason that we may not seem to be seekers of vengeance and like those who enjoy the shame of their brothers, as we have delivered over their names and their deeds to that one that holds the sum of the words and deeds of all reasonable ones within the fulness of His knowledge. However we endeavor to write these for the correction of ourselves and for the remembrance of those who are prepared to tread in the way of our conscience ⁷⁹. We will that this remembrance of our writings ⁸⁰ shall be observed in the community of the house of our teaching until the end.

We however, have also set up this stipulation among ourselves, that if somebody from the envious ones should act with boldness and dare the destruction of those which we have written, or to alter something in them to the contrary — this one shall be

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foreign to the fellowship of the mysteries ⁸¹ of the church and to the enjoyment of good things — those kept for the believers. The judgement of his audacity shall be kept for the great day of the revelation of the Messiah. But we all in one consent have accepted and approved these writings, and confirm them with the motions of our soul and with the members of our bodies.

And everyone of us who opposes, holds in light esteem and does not accept them in love — we have determined about him excommunication ⁸² (namely) with no alteration: that on the day he shows this mind, he shall become foreign to our community, and no one shall have intercourse with him for his shame.

⁸¹ Kiik 'arāzē more specifically means the Eucharist.

⁸² Lit. 'cutting', here 'excommunication' or 'anathema'.

[حنقنه]

[CANONS]

The first canon. At the time when it is proper, that the $rabbait\bar{a}^{\ 1}$ should be (set apart) and made known according to the order and custom year by year, with the counsel of our $rabban^{\ 2}$, the $mepa\check{s}$ - $q\bar{a}n\bar{a}^{\ 3}$ of the school and with that of the whole community 4 with

Although there exists an Arabic form of this Syriac term, it is noteworthy that the Arabic here employs instead the term haznā, 'supervisor', 'inspector'. This is not the usual Arabic equivalent for rabbaitā, see BAR BAHLUL, Lexicon Syriacum, ed. DUVAL, II, col. 1866; MANNA, Vocabulaire chaldéen arabe, p. 715 f. However Bar 'Ali renders it so, Ms. Par. syr. 253, fol. 166 a and Ms. 299, fol. 182 a; cf. Ms. 255, fol. 134 a; see also PAYNE SMITH, Thesaurus syriacus, II, col. 3785. The Aramaic im has made it more popular, 'Din has 'Di

ספר תורה ונותנו לראש הכנסת, Sota VII, 8, fol. 41 a, V, p. 311; cf. Yoma VII, 1.

The second term is the Syriac medabrānā, 'leader', cf. footnote 12, page 52. The term should be added to the nomenclature in GRAF, Verzeichnis arabischer kirchl. Termini, p. 104.

- 2 Rabban means 'our master', here the director of the school and the head of the community. The system that the mepašqānā was also the head of the school was borrowed from the traditions kept in the School of Edessa, Barhadbešabbā, Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 382.
- 3 'Commentator', 'expositor', 'interpreter' or 'exegete', who occupied the most important post in the school called ADDITION 'the chair of interpretation', BARHADBE-SABBĀ, Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 390.
 - 4 See footnote 13, page 53.

המבוא הבים לגוסבות הבוסבוא. האוב לא בלולי הנסהם הנצבו לבא העולא השלחוא : צל מנוק השפני מהא. חשוש המצו השביה עדש כבן מולין ומשום ביין למסבל. zija ochuja. Lach caar ciza. olwoza kije * Kouzzaz Kizazla 2 Kizaizl

פנוסנא הלון. וכנולא הין מום אידא ובביף לבא טביף שונה عل بمحنه بعدمين وبحصد ديمقم لم بده ي محنعم روعم ليم بهدون : محلعة همين مون مون به المام : تعليم منعقمه بهمده لع دفع. مدلع حلمهم منهماه م: تدعم: محصور دز على على محدثه الله مدلم على حل

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one consent they shall elect a reliable person 5 who is fitting for the guidance of the community. No one is permitted to stand up and to make a party, quarrel and confusion about something that was right 6. And whosoever is found that he does one of these (things), and stands up against the truth and disputes, shall receive punishment. He shall become foreign to the community and the residence in the town.

The second canon. The rabbaitā, however, that one who has been elected and entrusted with the guidance of the community, shall not judge by taking favor 7, and shall not be directed by his own conscience 8, and shall not proceed 9 with income and expense of the school without the two or three witnesses. And without the counsel of our rabban and that of the outstanding 10 brothers he shall not bring punishment on the offenders, but every act,

Here the Arabic version renders the لا ينبغى ان يحكم بالنفاق: text differently he shall وبشهوته بل بشهادة اثنين وثائة not judge in falsehood and in his passion but by the testimony of two or

 $5 \approx parsūpā = \pi \rho \acute{o}\sigma \omega \pi o v.$ three (witnesses)', Figh an-naṣrānīya, ed. Hoenerbach et Spies, p. 162.

9 The Arabic version reads here 'and he shall not announce', op. cit., p. 162.

10 A term used for outstanding and influential members in the monastic communities, see Ms. Dam. Patr. 9/8, eah. 8, fol. 10 b.

⁶ Lit. 'fair'.

⁷ Lit. 'accepting faces'.

⁸ Or 'mind'.

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ملامعمد، بعلم معنی بالد دنیر بی آمدی تدامه مدامه دامه دامه دامه معمد، دلین معمد، مدانی بیام

4 canon om. E — 5 EXT. BCD — 6 om. CD — 7 canon om. E

appointing punishment or remission or something else, he shall do with the counsel of the brothers.

The third canon. Some of the brothers who come to the school to learn instruction and abandon their promises and slip to take wives or are detected in adultery or in fornication or in stealing or in witchcraft or in a mind perverted from the true faith or are deceived to be distracted in vanities — which are slander, plotting, confusion, lie, intrigue 11 in the houses on the occasion of the banquets or contention of rebellion — the whole community determines that these shall not be received in the school, and also shall not be in the town.

The fourth canon. Those brothers who are in the school are not allowed to go over to the country of the Romans without precept

which means a 'mole'. It seems that it metaphorically and graphically refers to the activities of intrigue. However the Arabic text has understood this phrase differently and translates: ويطوفون البيوت 'and they

roam in the houses', Figh an-naṣrānīya, ed. Hoenerbach et Spies, p. 162. Yet it must be taken into account that the translator has not rendered the text carefully but has reduced it, giving here only an abridged compilation.

and order of the brothers and that of the $rabbait\bar{a}$ of the school, neither for the cause of the instruction 12 nor because of a pretense of prayer, also not in order to buy or to sell. Whoever, however, enters on the occasion of instruction or prayer without permission, shall not be received in the community. For the purpose of trade it is not lawful to get permission because it is outside the will of the canons, and is entirely foreign to the occupation of the community. But who, then, dares and enters the country of the Romans to work out a business 13, he shall not be received in the community. But if it seems (good) to the rabbaitā and to the brothers of the community to grant grace to them while they are not deserving it, because only once they were caught that they trod outside the custom of the community - those who entered because of teaching and prayer shall agree under strict 14 stipulation that they shall not enter again without permission. And after they receive censure and rebuke which they deserve, they shall be received. From those who entered because of trade shall be taken what they brought from the

heterodoxy.

obviously the reason is that schools of the communities and monasteries in the Byzantine territory were regarded as centers for the virus of

¹³ κ. 13 pragmațiā = πραγματεία.

¹⁴ Lit. 'true'.

⁸ ок В — ⁹ от. D — ¹⁰ от. В — ¹¹ lacuna A, _ отэл F, _ ото ВСО — ¹² кэло В

country of the Romans and it shall enter the treasury of the school, and then they shall be received. If, however, those brothers who have a good name and nothing is heard against them either in the community or in another place, have worked out business ¹⁵, a half of that what they have brought shall be taken from them for the treasury of the school. [Through these (proceedings)] they shall be received in the community. (As to) the second journey — if they are captured, they shall be driven away entirely from the community.

The fifth canon. No one of the brothers shall practice business ¹⁶ or craft. But if it is necessary ¹⁷ to buy and sell (then) from the month 'Āb ¹⁸ until Tešrī qadīm ¹⁹ outside of Nisibis ²⁰ in other coun-

¹⁵ See footnote 13, page 76.

¹⁶ See footnote 13, page 76.

¹⁷ The rules leave us with the impression that instruction in the school was free. At least there is nothing said about the financial obligations of the pupils towards the teachers and the school. However the students had to take care of their maintenance.

¹⁸ The month of August.

¹⁹ The month of October.

²⁰ Later it was found that this arrangement was not satisfactory and this order was changed. Barhadbesabbā, Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 397 f., speaks of the fathers who have arranged the work according to two harvest seasons, the harvest of corn and the harvest of the fruit, so that the sessions in the school followed these two seasons.

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13 canon om. E

tries. In Nisibis, however, except the workers ²¹, they are not allowed to practise business ²². A craft however, that is not shameful, they may work for three months.

The sixth canon. No one of the brothers who has earned denars beyond his need ²³, and seeks to lend them shall lend on usury. On interest, however, as this is in the church, that is one hundreth ²⁴ of a denar per year, he may ²⁵ lend in order that the community may not be reviled because of his affair if he takes more.

The seventh. The brothers, however, who enter the community newly, shall not be received until they have appeared before the $rabbait\bar{a}$ and the brothers, and have received instruction as to how they ought to be.

explains this in a specific sense: 'qui constituaient probablement une sorte de corporation ou de syndicat analogue à ceux dont nous connaissons l'existance dans d'autres villes grecques en Syrie'. The Arabic version, however, reads here: '\text{limited of the construction work and similar', Figh annaṣrānīya, ed. Hoenerbach et Spies, p. 163.

22 See footnote 13, page 76.

23 This canon shows that the students who entered the community of the school were not required to practice poverty.

24 κ. Δ. Δ. Δ. Δ. heqaṭāsṭā = ἐκατοστή.

25 A short epitome of the canons reshapes the text and forbids lending out also for interest, Ms. Par. syr. 306, fol. 111 b.

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The eighth. The brothers, however, who (already) are in the rank ²⁶ of the 'eskūlāiē ²⁷ are not allowed to cease from writing, reading ²⁸ and interpretation of the school and the 'recitation of the choirs' ²⁹ without an urgent affair.

The ninth. In the time, however, of the great $mautb\bar{a}^{30}$ when they have recited the psalm of the evening, everyone shall go into his cell ³¹. And when the cock crows everybody shall come and take (his) place ³². The one that was taken from the evening is not valid. Those, however, who come at the cock's crow shall leave one row before the bench ³³ to be for the brothers-presbyters, and shall take places in the other row.

26 Lit. 'name' or 'title'.

27 κίδον = σχόλια 'students', 'disciples'.

28 Lit. 'reading syllabi'.

29 In the sī'tā we have to do with two choirs arranged for antiphonal chanting. 'Abdīšō', Nomocanon, ed. Assemani, p. 274, in connection with the same term describes the canticles which were used, particularly the 'ūnīātā 'response'. These two things, interpretation and chanting appear in the description of Narsai's work, see Barhadbešabbā, Fondation, ed. Scher, p. 383.

30 mautbā 'a habitation'.

In the liturgical terminology it means a part of a service sung sitting and also a division of the Psalter, see Syriac and Arabic Documents, ed. Vööbus, p. 169, 188. Here it means a part of the work of the school that covers the session in the year. Concerning the latter see 'Abdīšō', Nomocanon, ed. Assemani, p. 273 f. and the Appendix.

31 κλιίο qelāitā = κέλλα.

32 This was the usual practice that study lasted from the morning until evening, see Ms. Mus. Borg. syr. 39, fol. 149 a.

33 Klasa sapsilā = subsellium.

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 15 om. E - 16 canon om. E - 17 $\stackrel{}{\searrow}$ BDF - 18 canon om. E

The tenth. The brothers, however, who come to the school shall not dwell singly and by two's in the cell but shall be with others without confusion.

The eleventh. The brothers who reside in one cell, if it happens that one of them become sick, shall be with him and serve him as is becoming ³⁴.

The twelfth. A brother who has a contention with his companion or against someone else, shall not go to the court of the outsiders out of his will without permission of the brothers and the $rabbait\bar{a}$. And a brother who dares and transgresses one of these canons and does not repent, shall become foreign to the community and the town.

The thirteenth. Those brothers, however, who are in the school, if, before they appear to be trained and know the order of the word, they are found that they speak in the school about an affair

³⁴ At that time the school had no ham, Barhadbešabbā, Histoire, ed. xenodocheion which was established NAU, p. 620 ff. About this episode later, under the directorship of Abrasee page 21.

مخدماء بع معده المامعد مندماء بعدماء من معدماء بعم

of the community 35, and cause confusion in the school shall be driven away from the community and from the town.

The fourteenth. A brother who finds something lost and does not come and notify the $rabbait\bar{a}$ about this in order that the affair may be announced in the community and the one whose is the lost may hear and take his own; or he requests a book from the $rabbait\bar{a}$ in order to read in it or to copy from it, and it happens that the $rabbait\bar{a}$ forgets (about it), the one who does not come to notify him 36 shall receive punishment and shall go from the town.

The fifteenth. A brother from among the brothers who notices that his companion is troubled ³⁷ by some offence and offers him correction, and he does not regret — and he neglects and does not come to inform the *rabbaitā*, and the matter becomes known after a certain time through another one, he shall share in the punishment of that who offended.

³⁵ See note 13, page 53.

³⁶ The Arabic version offers here a different sense: او ضاع كتاب من المدبّر يقرأ فيه او يكتب فيه وينساه المدبّر أفيه او يكتب فيه وينساه المدبّر if a book from which he reads and writes

becomes lost for the *rabbaitā*, and the *rabbaitā* forgets about it, and then the one who finds it does not come in order to notify him', *Fiqh an-naṣrā-nīya*, ed. Hoenerbach et Spies, p. 164.

^{37 &#}x27;Is vexed' or 'labors under some offence'.

حمة احت من عاد عاد المام معموم والمعمر والمعمد المناه المناهد المناهد

العدام المحمون المحمول المحمول المحمول المحمور المحم

الله المعدمة عن المعنى المعنى

 24 canon om. E — 25 canon om. E — 26 canon om. E

The sixteenth. A brother who accuses his companion regarding some offence and does not prove it, and he is found that falsely he has told about him, shall receive punishment which that offence deserves regarding which he has accused his companion.

The seventeenth. When somebody of the brothers becomes ill and approaches death — if he shall make a will 38 in the presence of the $rabbait\bar{a}$ and the brothers, something he has made shall be valid; if however, he shall make it when the $rabbait\bar{a}$ is far off, the will he has made shall be void, and all he has shall enter (the funds of) the school.

The eighteenth. If somebody of the brothers stretches out (his) hand because of one of the reasons which he may have and beats his companion or reviles him, and is proven by those who have seen it, is to be scourged ³⁹ before the entire community.

The nineteenth. If somebody of the brothers is scourged 40 in

³⁸ Koh. 1 diatiqua = $\delta \iota a \theta \eta \kappa \eta$ 'a ed out', 'tortured'. covenant', 'testament'. 40 About this term see the preceding footnote.

حله المحمد الموله الماله الما

ترعمة ب²⁹ بحمة بله تب محم بند محمد بالم تضمي ديم محمد المراب المحمد المراب ا

 27 om. D — 28 om. D — 29 canon om. E

the community because of a matter of offence for three times, and does not reform and if after this he shall commit another offence like one of the previous ones, he shall receive punishment, and shall go from the community and from the town.

The twentieth. But the $maqrei\bar{a}n\bar{e}^{41}$ and the $mehagei\bar{a}n\bar{e}^{42}$, those in the school, if they despise and neglect the order 43 of reading by syllables 44 and reading that is laid upon them, without a reason

41 CHABOT, L'école de Nisibe, p. 65 asserts : 'le terme paraît désigner spécialement le professeur chargé du cour de chant liturgique'. However, the functions of these 'lecturers' or 'teachers of reading' must have been manysided. These must have included grammatical studies. One of these maqreiānē of the same school, Jausep Hūzāiā, produced the most ancient grammar of which we have knowledge. Already its title is instructive: I was whomprosize to حے محن دمعد ممانی محمندی دحد i'about the subject of grammar, composed by Rabban Mār Jausep Hūzāiā, a maqreiānā of the house of the Rabban Mar Narsai, the mepašqānā', Ms. Baghd. 522, fol. 79 a. Further it included instruction in liturgical reading namely where to raise and lower one's voice and use different intonation. Regarding the term in connection with this artful liturgical reading, cf. Ms. Berl. Sach. 83, fol. 6 a and Ms. Šarf. Patr. 247, fol. 46 b. Finally, these functions included liturgical chanting, see footnote 29, page 79.

teacher helping to read syllables or a teacher in meditation. Chabot, following the last line, has supposed that the term here refers to a teacher in rhetoric, L'école de Nisibe, p. 65 î. In other sources the term evidently refers to the elementary instruction in reading, cf. Ms. Par. syr. 375, fol. 152 b. Thus one of his functions was to explicate the words and help the students in difficulties caused by the differences between the vernacular and literary language.

43 $\kappa m \rightarrow taks \bar{a} = \tau \acute{a} \xi \iota s$.

44 means 'reading by syllables' as a beginner.

علیه می حلحه بدم علمه بدماهی محدهمه بندی همه محددلی حنیمه می محمد ایم بینه بست محده ایم منتب به محده ایم ایم منتب به محده ایم منتب به منتب به محده ایم محده ایم منتب به محده ایم منتب به محده ایم محده ایم محده ا

30 canon om. E — 31 КыКВ— 32 add. Дэю F — 33 лякэ В, КыКэ СД

of sickness and permission of our *rabban*, they shall receive a rebuke; sustenance which they are entitled to receive, is withheld from them; and they cannot ⁴⁵ be present to hear the judgement of the school.

The twenty first. Whoever is detected because of some offence, and the brothers and the $rabbait\bar{a}$ of the community have determined the punishment upon him which he is to receive according to his offence, but he does not obey the decision that they have determined over him, and he goes and takes refuge with some cleric ⁴⁶ or one of the seculars and seeks for himself patrons ⁴⁷ and a defender ⁴⁸—he shall not be worthy of mercy even if his offence is small. And he shall be driven away from the fellowship of the community ⁴⁹ and from the dwelling place that is in the town (because) he persisted obstinately and did not accept the decision that was (made) against him.

p. 76 f.

47 Rairōnē = patronus.

⁴⁵ This seems to be the meaning of this sentence. Literally however the translation reads: 'they do not come near'.

^{46 (}Ceci montre que l'École était exempte de la juridiction épiscopale, privilège ... accordé à un grand nombre de monastères et d'établissements scolaires', Chabot, École de Nisibe,

⁴⁸ κιω ωπ is = παραστασία does not appear in Payne Smith, Thesaurus syriacus, col. 3242 ff.

⁴⁹ Here the Arabic version adds that he shall be excluded also from the church, Fiqh an-naṣrānīya, ed. Hoenerbach et Spies, p. 165.

* 34 asle

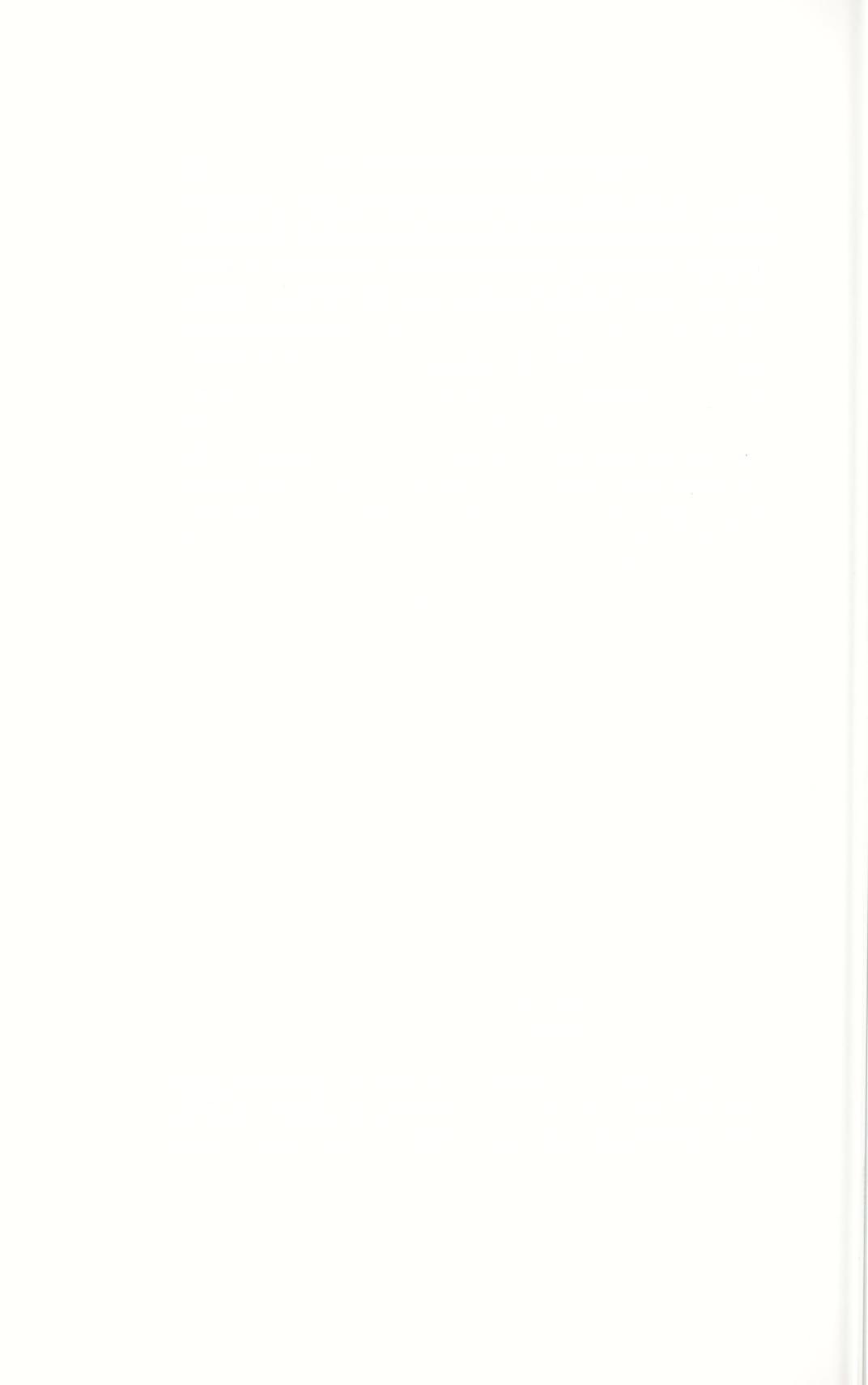
34 om. E

The twenty second. Every one who has become a $rabbait\bar{a}$ is not allowed to act contrary to these (rules) that are written in this book. And if he shows himself that he acts otherwise, he shall give to the school as a recompense 50 10 denars of gold, and shall leave the community and the town in shame 51 .

(The canons) end.

⁵⁰ καταδίκη 'sentence', 'punishment', 'condemnation'.

⁵¹ About the qualifications of a rabbaitā, see Marūtā, Sūnhādōs tibēlāitā L, ed. Vööbus, p. 130 f.



[Kijaz]

[RATIFICATION]

Also we, brothers, in this time of the rule of the peaceful and kind ¹ Khosrau ², king of the kings, under the glorious and upright leadership of the highpriesthood of the holy Mār Paulos ³, the bis-

1 From that which we know of the situation at that time, we can conclude that it was an epoch marked by favorable conditions. It is reflected in a lively activity in erecting monasteries during the period of Catholicos Jausep, who ruled from 552 till 566, Eliiā bar Sīnāiā, Ms. Vat. syr. 520, fol. 214 a - 251 a. Khosrau had, in his peace treaty with the Emperor Justinian in the year 563, given assurance that there would be freedom of religion in his empire, including permission for the erection of buildings, designed for the purpose of the cult, Menander, Fragmenta historica, ed. DINDORF, II, p. 24.

² This is Khosrau I Anoširvan who ruled from 531 till 579.

³ The chronicle of Mešīḥāzekā informs us that previously he was a teacher in Ḥedaiab where he served for about 30 years, Sources syriaques, ed. Mingana, p. 75. That Paulos took part in the theological discussions

with the Emperor Justinian, appears in his report about the deliberations which was sent to Qīswai, a physician at the court, Abū L-Barakāt, Miṣbāḥ az-zilma, ed. Riedel, p. 652; a letter of Barṣaumā, bishop of Šuš, sent to Īšōʻiahb I, refers to his trip to the emperor, Histoire nestorienne, ed. Scher, XIII, p. 568, also that of Gīwargī, metropolitan of Moṣul, Ms. Vat. arab. 110, fol. 190 a - 192 b. An evidence appears also in a document of which an excerpt has survived, Ms. Br. Mus. Add. 14,535, fol. 16 b - 18 b.

The attempt, see Mercati, Vita e gli scritti di Paolo, p. 3 ff., to identify him with Paulos the Persian, described by Junilius Africanus, has found much approbation. Junilius reports: Ad haec ego respondi, vidisse me quendam Paulum nomine, Persam genere, qui in Syrorum schola in Nisibi urbe est edoctus, ubi divina lex per magistros publicos, sicut apud nos in mundanis studiis grammatica

مرام محسر المعنى المعنى المداعية المحسوب المعرف المعنى المعرف المعنى المعرف المعنى المعرف ال

שבו שבן D

hop 4 who in our period is entrusted to shepherd the sheep of the Messiah, and under the supreme and skilful teaching of our fathers and the $rabb\bar{a}n\bar{e}^{5}$, God-loving Mār Abraham 6, presbyter and $mepa\check{s}q\bar{a}n\bar{a}^{7}$ of the divine books, and Mār Narsai 8, deacon and $maqrei\bar{a}n\bar{a}^{9}$, — we consent 10 and accept these canons which were set up by our holy fathers 11 and entrusted (to us) with a true

et rhetorica, ordine ac regulariter traditur, Instituta regularia, ed. MIGNE, col. 15. However all the data conflict with the evidence in the sources, see Vööbus, School of Nisibis, chapter V.

Another attempt to identify him with Paulos of Bāṣrā who composed a work on the logic of Aristotle, Logica, in Anecdota syriaca, ed. Land, IV, p. 1 ff., dedicated to Khosrau, made by Nestle, TLZ I (1876), col. 668 f.; Labourt, Christianisme dans l'empire perse, p. 166, and Chabot, Littérature syriaque, p. 52, is impossible. After the collapse of his aspirations to become metropolitan of Persis, this Paulos abandoned the Christian faith, Bar Ebrālā, Chronicon cecl.. ed. Abbeloos et Lamy, II, col. 97.

4 His consecration could not have taken place before Catholicos Abā's return from Bēt Hūzāiē in 551, see Abā, Lettre V, ed. Chabot, p. 93;

 $Ta\check{s}^{e}\bar{\imath}t\bar{a}$ $de\text{-}M\bar{a}r$ $Ab\bar{a}$, ed. Bedjan, p. 269 ff.

It seems that this is the same prelate whose name appears among the signatures given to the acts of the synod held in the year 554 under Catholicos Jausep, Synodicon orientale, ed. Chabot, p. 108.

Paulos died at the time of the conquest of Dārā by the Persians, *Histoire nestorienne*, ed. Scher, VII, p. 193 ff., i.e. in the year 571.

- 5 The plural form of 'our master', ef. footnote 2, page 73.
 - 6 See page 23 ff.
 - 7 See footnote 3, page 73.
- 8 Nothing is known about his person.
 - 9 See footnote 41, page 83.
 - 10 Or 'approve'.
- tion made by the Chronicle of Arbēl that canons' were set up for the rabbaita, Sources syriaques, ed. Mingana, p. 73.

محمد الماء معام المعام المعام المعام الماء الما

مه مع وما معرف المعلى المعالى المعال

2 Arrano BE — 3 Kruno CEF

stipulation that we do and fulfil all that is written here without resistance and impudence 12.

And whoever is caught that he transgresses one of these laws according to what is written above, in consent we issue judgement over him and no one shall be allowed to help him in any way or (for) any reason.

Confirmed and verified is this book through the Amen 13 that is not to be deceived.

The canons end (here) which were set up in the days of Mār Hōše^c 14 and Mār Narsai 15 the teachers of truth.

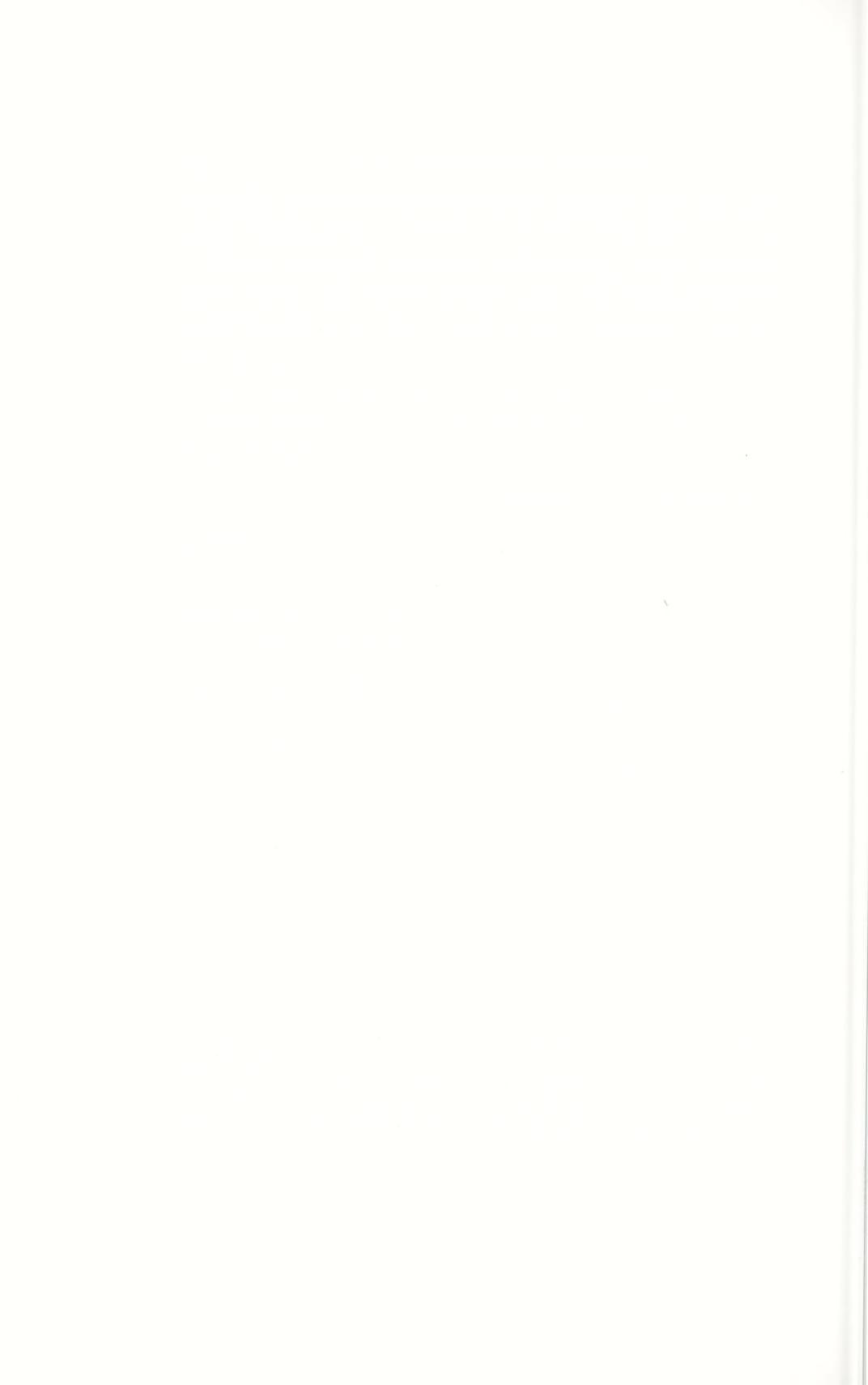
¹² The Chronicle of Arbēl tells that this necessity was caused by the unrest which had broken out because of bad management of the property of the school, Mešīhāzekā, Histoire, ed. Min-

GANA, p. 73.

¹³ Used here as a formula of confirmation or sanction.

¹⁴ See page 55.

¹⁵ See page 21 ff.



مرقعه عمل مرقعه

לום ביום אים אים האללמוכה האללעוכה בצול לוללא הובהלה הבישה הובהלה הובהלה הבישה הביוה לבלא החולכות כלא כליא ביוא הביוה הביוה שבוכא שבובא שביבא שבובא שביבא שבובא שבובא שבובא שבובא שבובא

FURTHER — OTHER CANONS OF THE SAME SCHOOL

Again (these are) other canons which were set up and laid down in the 12th year of the victory 1 of the merciful 2 and beneficient 3 Hormizd, king of the kings, under the leadership of the watchful

¹ What is meant here is the event of his enthronization in February 579 following Khosrau I. The twelfth year would be 590 A.D.

Although the wording is somewhat strange, it cannot refer to any other event since his rule did not last longer than 12 years.

2 Bal'amī eulogizes his actions and claims that his justice surpassed that of Anoširvan, Chronique, tr. Zotenberg, II, p. 246. Also Hišām ibn Muḥammad, see Ṭabarī, Tarīḥ arrusul, ed. Barth, Nöldeke, etc. p. 988. However, other sources draw a different picture. Ṭabarī quotes a source according to which he was reckless towards the nobles and the influential people, whom he put into prison and executed them, ibid., p. 990. An anonymous chronicle in Syriac states that a heavy yoke was placed on the nobles and on

all the people, Chronicon anonymum, ed. Guidi, p. 15.

3 Christian sources praise his magnanimity and kindness greater than any other king had offered, Histoire nestorienne, ed. Scher, VII, p. 195; Amr, De patriarchis nest., ed. Gismondi, p. 45. His reply to the Magi reveals his patent sympathy for the Christians, as this is demonstrated by a reliable tradition, see Țabarī, Tarīḥ ar-rusul, ed. Barth, Nöldeke etc., p. 990 f. These sentiments of gratitude are reflected in the synodical acts composed under Īšōʻiahb I, Synodicon orientale, ed. Chabot, p. 130.

However we hear of the churches which were destroyed under Hormizd's rule, Petros, Tašetā de-Mār Sabrīšōe, ed. Bedjan, p. 306. These actions must have been the result of the initiative of the local authorities.

1 , i_ > D

shepherd and wise director, our blessed father, Mār Šem'ōn 4, bishop-metropolitan, and during the teaching of Ḥenānā 5, presbyter, skilful in his knowledge and glorious in his humility, and Mār Qaššā 6, $maqrei\bar{a}n\bar{a}$ 7 and $bad\bar{u}q\bar{a}$ 8, and Mār Ḥenanīšō' 9, presbyter and $mehagei\bar{a}n\bar{a}$ 10 together with Ḥūḥ 11 the $rabbait\bar{a}$ of the school and all the outstanding and $bad\bar{u}q\bar{a}$ 12 brothers that are in the community this time.

The first canon. The 'aksenādākrā 13 who is in the xenodocheion 14 of the school shall carefully provide for the brothers that have become sick, and nothing shall be lacking in the (things) required for their nourishment and their cure; and further he shall not

4 About this Šem'on some information appears in the synodical acts of the year 585. Can. XXX reports about the schism between Šem'on and Grīgor of Kēw Ardāšīr which was so serious that they were threatened with suspension, Synodicon orientale, ed. Chabot, p. 163; see also Vööbus, Syrische Kanonessammlungen, II. In the preamble of the canons of Dadīšo', in the Monastery of Īzlā, written in the 10th year of the rule of Hormizd, January 588, he is referred to as 'the martyr and holy Mār Šem'on', Syriac and Arabic Documents, ed. Vööbus,

- p. 165.
 - 5 See page 25 ff.
 - 6 Nothing is known about him.
 - 7 See footnote 41, page 83.
 - 8 See footnote 7, page 52.
 - 9 Nothing is known about him.
 - 10 See footnote 42, page 83.
- 11 This word obviously must be a name.
 - 12 See footnote 7, page 52.
- 13 κίσοιμως $^{\prime}$ aksanādākrā = ξενοδόκος 'the curator of a hospital'.
- 14 γας 'aksānādāukīn = ξενοδοχεῖον 'a hospital'.

محلحة بجم محلوبه بهموه لم علائمه مدهقه بهمون لم لی دعدد. می دعم دس دستی دم سلم دهندم حمدة دی किन कि करंग की लगत मीत्र या मिन प्रवास त्याक. वक्त ج مومدی این محاصم کی دو مرحمه به

تلفنع. محنك محامعها بهنام منامع معدما حمصده لم معتنى منع لحدمة دمل به مدنيم لم عليل. ب عدن دیموده لی سامعد دم

عة معلفة ب محلك بمنت معنتمي بي السعب معلوميم לבשם למחם. אם כנינא מלכנא לבעודם אנם .. חאו

steal or be unfaithful in something that has been entrusted to him in order to manage it. Without the malpānā 15 of the school he shall not arrange 16 income and expenses of the school. If he is found that he does not do one of these that are written in these canons, everything that he has defrauded or concealed, shall be taken from him. He shall give as punishment 17 money 18, 50 'estirēn 19 for the xenodocheion. Then he shall leave the school and the town in shame.

The second. The brothers who come to the school — as long as the cells 20 in the school are empty — no one is allowed to dwell with the Nisibeans. If one dwells (with them), he shall not be received in the school.

The third. The rabbaitā of the community ought to fulfil the order of our rabban 21 as he goes around because of the needy brothers whether it is necessary to set bread before them, or whether it is

^{15 &#}x27;Doctor'. As the highest de- $z\bar{u}z$, a coin equal to a Greek drachma signation in Ms. Par. syr. 375, fol. 198 b. However, it is also used generally for all teachers, cf. Ms. Mus. Borg. syr. 155, fol. 8 b.

¹⁶ Lit. 'shall not make'.

¹⁷ See footnote 50, page 85.

¹⁸ The text has $z\bar{u}z\bar{e}$, the plural of

or to a quarter shekel of Jewish money. Here it is not used in its exact meaning but in general sense as money.

¹⁹ $Est\bar{i}r\bar{a}$, a stater worth four $z\bar{u}z\bar{e}$.

²⁰ See footnote 31, page 79.

²¹ See footnote 2, page 73.

بخ میر اسعی المعد المعد المعدد المع

المادعم، الموامد المو

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5 canon om. E — 6 om. BCD — 7 Δο BCD — 8 canon om. E — 9 om. BCD — 10 κδιωτο BCD

necessary to aid them in the court ²². No one of the brothers is allowed to take bread for another ²³. He shall not be slack in his occupation, not even in the pretence ²⁴ of righteousness, and shall not go around in the town.

The fourth. No one shall leave under the pretext ²⁵ of right-eousness ²⁶ the dwelling-place with the brothers and go out and build for himself a hut ²⁷ outside the town or by the side of the town, but shall keep the lawful dwelling place. If he desires to excel ²⁸ he may go into a monastery or into the desert.

The fifth. The brothers who are not found in the time of the 'lamp' 29 or reading and interpretation or choir until they show

²² Or also 'judgement'.

 $^{^{24}}$ Kansia parṣū $p\bar{a}=\pi\rho\delta\sigma\omega\pi\sigma\nu$.

²⁵ See footnote 24.

²⁶ Or 'almsgiving'.

²⁷ kurḥā means also a 'cell'.

²⁸ The Arabic version reads here: 'if he wishes 'if he wishes to become a monk', Fiqh an-naṣrānīya, ed. Hoenerbach et Spies, p. 166.

The Arabic version also is of no help since it has not translated these words. The most natural way would be to understand this word as a reference to the vigils. Vigils at night and work in the morning in the school appear in the same connection in other documents, cf. Ms. Br. Mus. Add. 12, 174, fol. 254 a.

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11 canon om. E — 12 canon om. E

an evident ³⁰ affair because of which they have neglected the time that was set for study, shall not be excused; or they shall be sought out by the heads ³¹ of the cells ³² or by the $rabbait\bar{a}$ of the school if they do not obey the heads of the cells.

The sixth. Those brothers who leave the school before completion, or when being in it, are found that they are outside the firm rules ³³ and lawful life with the brothers — when they die, shall not share in the law of the community ³⁴ of the school. They shall, however, have more honor than a secular, — if it seems to the *rabbaitā* and to the brothers of the school that this person ³⁵ deserves it.

The seventh. The brothers who excel in the learning and further appear (that they are) able to teach others, and are ordered by the $malp\bar{a}n\bar{a}^{36}$ to go and to teach, and because they are possessed ³⁷ by the school and the long stay ³⁸ which they had in the town, it is

³⁰ Lit. 'known'.

³¹ Discipline in the school was carried out by a scale of officers. These 'heads of the cells' seem to represent the lowest rank in the system of supervision.

³² See footnote 31, page 79.

³³ Or 'stable life'.

³⁴ See footnote 13, page 53.

³⁵ See footnote 5, page 74.

³⁶ See footnote 15, page 93.

³⁷ Lit. 'holding'.

³⁸ Lit. 'acquaintance', 'intimacy', 'relation'.

حامعده له الحصه له علول الدهمة المامه المحده المامة المحديد المحديد

13 canon om. E — 14 canon om. E — 15 canon om. E

difficult for them to separate, are not allowed to be in the school, not even to stay in the town.

The eighth. The books which have been determined for the school by the brothers who have deceased — if somebody of the $rabai-b\bar{a}t\bar{e}$ or of the brothers is caught that he blurs the memory ³⁹ of the deceased ones, or changes or steals (these books) are not allowed to be in the school; they shall not even have a dwelling place in the town.

The ninth. Of the brothers who live together, each of them shall not eat bread by himself, but their life shall be in common as their study.

The tenth. In the time of harvest ⁴⁰ or (season of) the workers ⁴¹, no one shall calumniate his companion and in his wretchedness, because of his avidity, shall not turn and deny the stipulation which he previously had made with his brothers regarding the work.

39 What is meant thereby is the erasure of the lines of dedication found usually on the first or the last folios of the codices. The same phrase occurs in the manuscripts, cf. Ms. Bibl. Publ. Len. 3. PIGOULEWSKI, Manuscrits syriaques, p. 399.

- 40 See footnote 20, page 77.
- 41 The Arabic version has here a different reading: في زمان... والبناء in the time... of construction', Figh an-naṣrānīya, ed. Hoenerbach et Spies, p. 167.

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تنه المحمة. بع منه به معدة لم مند حلعة بع مدهميه الماله منه المحمدة به المحمدة الماله المحمدة به ا

16 canon om. E — 17 canon om. E — 18 ok. asok F — 19 om. E

The eleventh. No one is allowed to neglect the service of the departed one or the vigil of the brothers, with the exception of sickness or evident necessity. The one who abstains from this shall be corrected before the entire school.

The twelfth. The brothers who come to the school because of study, are not allowed to found a school of boys in the town so that they may not be ensnared by other (things) ⁴². Those, however, who seem not to be able to work whether because of age or because of weakness, shall be permitted to obtain up to 2 or 3 boys; if they are found that they take ⁴³ more than this number, they shall be excommunicated by the school, they and their disciples also.

The thirteenth. No one of the brothers of the school is allowed to watch ⁴⁴ in the town or to eat ⁴⁵ (the meal of) the commemorations without the permission of the *rabbaitā*. And if they are found

⁴² The Arabic version reads: ايناق عن اشغاله الخاصة بد 'in order that he may not be hindered in his own works', op. cit., p. 167.

⁴³ Lit. 'make'.

⁴⁴ I.e. 'keep vigil'.

⁴⁵ Instead of this the Arabic version reads: إيمال ذكرا 'and celebrate the service of commemoration', op. cit., p. 167.

لی علیکی، می معمد الله الله الله عداد، مدامی عفری مهدی در در در می مده ای می در در می مده ای می در می می در

20 canon om. E — 21 index ACD — 22 om. CD

that they do this without the $rabbait\bar{a}$, they shall be in (the state of) excommunication ⁴⁶ from the school.

The fourteenth. The brothers, however, who stand in the honor of the scholarship if they are not able to work out of weakness or defect 47 , shall inform the $rabbait\bar{a}$ of the school of their needs, who shall help them as much as possible. However, they are not allowed to beg from the believers, to ask something at the door of the rich ones or among the women, under the pretext that they were sent from our rabban or from the $rabbait\bar{a}$ or from outstanding brothers. And if they are found that on behalf of the $malp\bar{a}n\bar{e}^{48}$ and brothers they beg money — such ones as these shall be completely expelled from the community and from the town.

The fifteenth. The brothers who come to the instruction before the time indicated for the reading of the words of the books and

⁴⁶ However, the term can mean 'suspension'.

48 See footnote 15, page 93 and footnote 36, page 95.

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ساقعهد، بح معده معده بعد بعد بعد بعده المعدة 23 Klara _ alak Kl Kinas dusa Khains _ amount مه دام محتا که حکونت محدود دهم سحده محاتمه Kried KK9.7 yok: pools aisines andulas י במתאוםז א אובשאם

השבה בשו האושה הין האשבה בב הוציה ומחם השבלים בה efel los ne. el nacien iles en oracin. er la الانعاء بهد معنه عقرطه من مدنك عنه علم علمة علم سلمامالاء بعمه محلحه محلحه معمد مناهمه مرام

23 Klar BCDE, KlrF - 24 Khras B

the hearing of the meaning (of them) shall not give themselves to the reading and hearing of the group. These shall be tested with the canon 49 by the $rabbait\bar{a}$ and outstanding brothers.

The sixteenth. The brothers who are in the school, so long as they are in the school, shall not eat in the taverns and restaurants, they shall also not arrange picnics 50 and drinking parties 51 in the gardens and parks 52, but shall endure all in their cells as is becoming for the purpose and the manner 53 of their $qei\bar{a}m\bar{a}$ 54.

The seventeenth. Along with learning the brothers of the school shall be diligent also over the 'eskīmā 55 of the dress and hair: they shall not shave entirely 56, also they shall not grow curls 57 like the seculars but they shall go about within the school and on the streets of the town in chaste tonsure and dignified dress that is

- 49 A brief epitome of the canons understands this as 'in matter of 'form', 'shape', or 'manner'. faith', Ms. Par. syr. 306, fol. 111 b.
 - 50 حلت مى $sar{u}blar{a} = \sigma \acute{v}\mu eta o \lambda a$.
 - 51 Lit. 'mixed drinks'.
- 52 The Arabic version reads: >, they also shall not أكلون في بستان eat in a garden', Fiqh an-naṣrānīya, ed. Hoenerbach et Spies, p. 167.
- 53 ' $Eskim\bar{a} \equiv \sigma \chi \tilde{\eta} \mu a$ meaning here
- 54 See footnote 14, page 53.
 - 55 See footnote 21, page 54.
- 56 This is a reference to the form of tonsure.
- 57 The Arabic version reads: y, they shall not grow 'they shall not grow temple curls', op. cit., p. 168.

المصور حله محده لم المحدة ال

تراعم على على المحمدة المحمدة

 25 lacuna B — 26 canon om. E — 27 lacuna BCD

far from luxury, so that through these both they shall be known to everybody —, to the stranger and to those belonging to the household.

The eighteenth. No one of the brothers of the school is allowed to teach the women, benat qeiāmā ⁵⁸ from the town or outside the town under the pretext ⁵⁹ of the right cause ⁶⁰, also no one shall have continuance of talk ⁶¹ and prolonged conversation with women, in order that there may come no offence and blasphemy through this cause. And when he is found that he acts otherwise, he shall be foreign to the community and go from the town.

The nineteenth. The brothers who have come because of instruction, are not allowed to live together with the physicians 62 in order

58 'The daughters of the covenant', i.e. the female members of the ascetic institution called the qeiāmā. About their regulations see Rabbūlā, Pūq-dānē, ed. Vööbus, p. 37 ff.; Marūtā, Sūnhādōs tibēlāitā XXVI, ed. Vööbus, p. 121 ff.

About this institution and its history, see Vööbus, Celibacy, p. 33 ff.; ID. Institution of the benai qeiāmā, p. 21 ff.

- 59 See footnote 24, page 94.
- 60 Lit. 'righteousness'.
- ولا يطيل : and he shall not dwell 'and he shall not dwell at a woman for a longer time', Fiqh an-naṣrānīya, ed. Hoenerbach et Spies, p. 168.

62 This canon shows that the students of medicine were not held in a high esteem in the school.

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مهماماعه مهم مربقه معافرة مربقه مربعا والم

28 canon om. E — 29 lacuna B — 30 KJIIONI E

that the books of the craft of the world should not be read with the books of the holiness in one light ⁶³.

The twentieth. The brothers who have left the scholarship and have departed for the (discipline of) medicine ⁶⁴ — if there is no good testimony about them, they are not allowed to hear in the school, except, however, the physicians, inhabitants ⁶⁵ of the town.

The twenty first. No one of the brothers of the school shall dare to shelter the captives under the pretext ⁶⁶ of righteousness or assist the slaves to flee from their masters ⁶⁷ in order that there may be no occasion for harm for the holy community.

We have consented and do consent to all these canons which are

of or 'flame', 'torch'. The Arabic version: المالم الله فكتب الدين وكتب المالم الله فكتب الدين وكتب المالم الله فكتب الدين وكتب المالم 'for the books of religion and the books of the world do not get on together', op. cit., p. 168.

الاخوة الذين: The Arabic version الاخوة الذين السكول وخرجو الى الضياع ليس تركوا الاسكول وخرجو الى الضياع ليس لهم ان يحضروا السماع والقراة في الاسكول 'the brothers who have left the school and have gone into the villages, shall not be present

at the hearing and reading in the school, except if they are physicians' op. cit., p. 168.

65 Lit. 'sons of the town'.

66 See footnote 24, page 94.

67 See the ruling of MARŪTĀ, $S\bar{u}nh\bar{a}d\bar{o}s$ $tib\bar{e}l\bar{a}it\bar{a}$ LIV, 27, ed. Vööbus, p. 144.

Regarding the concern of the monastic movement for people suffering injustice and oppression, see Vööbus, Karitative Tätigkeit des syr. Mönchtums, p. 23 ff.

השבוא השוו הולימשט הוואסשט המטונהיו הופילשם مروزيم. علحم معلحم لصم على مقدم معلم محدة م המל עשי הוא השביש מנישא האמבהלא הון בנו אולין. لابعام حسمانع بن محسمه مرسم براسه * Loson, Lewy olmoses reup , mader

the helpers of prudence, the discipliners of freedom, promoters and correctors of the soul and of the body likewise, and we, all the outstanding and $bad\bar{u}q\bar{a}$ 68 brothers who in this time are in the holy community of the school of Nisibis, indeed, we know and are convinced that these commandments are of our Lord. And he who turns away and neglects their observance, is foreign to our community and the manner of life 69 that is among us.

[Kijaz]

1770 KIDWIDT WHOTIL IKIWEAPP PIE KIMDO

1 Kimshldin BCDE

[RATIFICATION]

In this 13th year 1 of the victory 2 of the merciful and beneficient 3

- ¹ According to the chronological calculations the year would be 602 A.D.
- What is meant here are the events of the year 590 which brought Khosrau Parvez to the throne. The aspirations of Vahram, military commander of Hyrcania and Khorasan, to the throne, were frustrated by the nobility which hated Hormizd and was ready to sacrifice him but wanted to salvage the dynasty and therefore proclaimed his son Khosrau as the new king. However only the military help given him by Emperor Maurice finally secured victory over the rebellion, Chronicon anonymum, ed. Guidi, p. 15 f.
- 3 Christians had many reasons to use such epithets. According to Bar 'Ebrāiā, Chronicon syr., ed. Bruns et Kirsch, p. 97 in his liberality he built churches for Širin and also a monastery, Taš·ītā de-Mār Sabrīšō·, ed. Bedjan, p. 306. He made donations to the Christian institutions, ὁ δὲ τοῦ 'Ρωμαϊκοῦ βασιλεὺς σωματοφύλακας εἰς Χοσρόην ἐξέπεμπεν· εἰς νοῦν τοίνυν

βαλόμενος ὁ τῶν Περσῶν βασιλεὺς τὴν ἄνωθεν αὐτῷ τῆς ἐπικουρίας γεγονυῖαν ροπήν, τῷ ἐν μάρτυσιν ἐπιφανεστάτω Σεργίω σταυρον έκ χρυσοῦ πεποιημένον, λιθοκόλλητον, δῶρον ἐξέπεμπεν, ὃν δῆτα Χοσρόης ὁ Καβάδου τὸ ἄστυ παραστησάμενος, λαφυραγωγήσας, εν τοις των Περσων ανακτόροις ἀπέθετο, ἔτι τὸ 'Ρωμαϊκὸν σκῆπτρον 'Ιουστινιανοῦ τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος ἐπιβαίνοντες, Theophylactus, HistoriaV, 13, 14, ed. BEKKER, p. 229 f. He also gave his permission to erect cult-buildings wherever Christians wished to build, AL-THA ALIBI, Histoire, ed. ZOTENBERG, p. 671.

The sources speak of a vigorous building-activity that took place at that time. Many ruins of the sanctuaries were restored, and many new churches and monasteries were erected, Petros, Tašūtā de-Mār Sabrīšō, ed. Bedjan, p. 306 f. Particularly outstanding is the role of Jazdīn, a Christian dignitary at the court, who lives forth in the tradition as a great benefactor, Chronicon anonymum, ed. Guidi, p. 23.

JEBN comin cely celen. et necesa chil Marken ain mly shush lelm espassion הראות אנה האנה מנינה מבנוסטא. בם המבינה of entry applied . ouppoured arigh why elastopy KEN KAUSI KIES KIE LE aisto Klasoki Khuss מוס בוח בנחבות. איבוא נמי שובא נסו מוח שוב בדינו obisno chuefo. oucis onaccióus no unles 4 Kli . airia airibi ak .Ktiag 3 caris : _ 00007 KED KDON 6 KJUK 5_ 0000

مسلم متنك متسك محدمقك. تعديقهم عل يد لمحديم صه دم دم د المعادم الم ² muio E — ³ lacuna A, alama BCDE, and F — ⁴ Kla B — 5 _ o.x y bu B, lacuna CD _ assabu E — 6 代iv K BCDE

Khosrau 4, king of kings, when these canons were searched for, collected and written 5, it appeared to the entire community that through the seal and signature of the outstanding and the $bad\bar{u}q\bar{a}^6$ brothers along with the $maqrei\bar{a}n\bar{a}^{7}$ and the $rabbait\bar{a}$ these canons should be confirmed, and be placed in the guardianship in the house of the school, and shall be read one time before the entire community year after year 8 so that the assiduous ones may become more diligent from the hearing of their reading and the slothful and the hypocrites may either change their habit or [receive] correction or be condemned and depart and others may not be drawn to the likeness of the evil, that is in them.

And we, the outstanding and the $bad\bar{u}q\bar{a}^9$ brothers, whose names are written besides our seals for the indication of our agreement with

ruled from 590 till 628.

⁵ What is meant is that the text was copied from the original rules.

⁶ See footnote 7, page 52.

⁷ See footnote 41, page 83.

⁸ About this practice to read the canons before the entire community, see the canons of Marūtā of Maipher-

⁴ This is Khosrau II Parvez who qat, Sūnhādōs tibēlāitā LVIII, 1-4, ed. Vööbus, p. 147. According to these regulations twice a year the chorepiscopus had to read the canons before the benai qeiāmā, the monastic canons before the community of monks and the ecclesiastical canons before the congregation.

⁹ See footnote 7, page 52.

مری سر سر در اور اسلامی مهوره به المحیه ال

7 12 B - 8 add. Kuk D

these canons — we have signed and sealed (them), each one of us. We make petition ¹⁰ also to the 'election' ¹¹ of our blessed father Mār Aḥādeābūhi ¹², bishop-metropolitan ¹³, and to the holiness of our excellent *rabban* Mār Ḥenānā ¹⁴, presbyter. And also these have set their seals with us on these writings and confirmed them. These are confirmed and firm, without alteration and change.

(Here) end the canons of the School of Nisibis, the mother of the towns.

¹⁰ Lit. 'desire'.

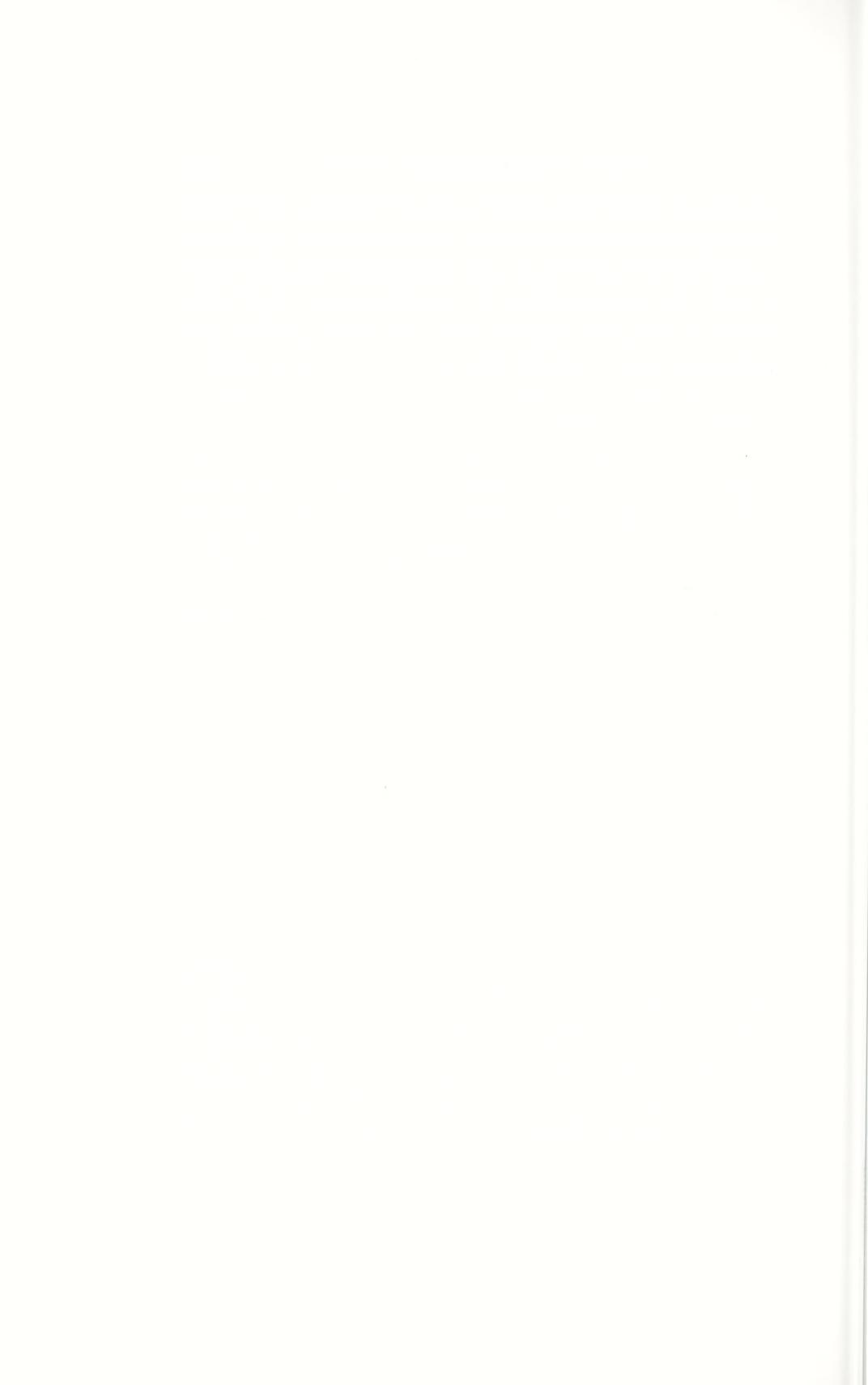
¹¹ Used by the Syrians as a title in respectful address.

¹² This name is very unusual.

¹³ The time of his rule is not known. According to the Church History of Mīkā, Grīgōr became metropolitan of Nisibis in 596, ELHĀ BAR ŠINĀIĀ, Opus chronologicum, ed. Brooks, I, p.

^{123;} after some time he was expelled by Khosrau, Chronicon anonymum, ed. Guidi, p. 18. Aḥādeābūhi seems to have been his successor. How long he kept his office is also unknown. In any case in the year 615 the seat was occupied by Mār Bāšā, Ms. Br. Mus. Add. 14,471, fol. 108 a.

¹⁴ See page 25 ff.



APPENDIX

1. THE TEXT OF 'ABDĪŠO'

المعقده لم المعقدم

مانجها حدم مانحات

Of the School of Nisibis

In the first year if there is bread in the school the mautbā⁴ shall be the second week that is after the Sunday 'After Thy burial'; and if there is no bread in the school and the students have the need to eat from their labors, the second week that is after the Sunday 'Not from the living'.

The first year they shall write the first part of the $b\bar{e}t$

رتب الملافنه ان يقرا في السنة الاولى بعد احد ان كان في الاسكول خبزا وسن بعد احد ان كانوا يحتاجون ان يجمعوا لنفوسهم القوت

وتكون الكتابة في هذه السنة الجزء الاول سن.....وكتاب فولوس

The teachers have ordered that in the first year it will be read after the Sunday... ⁵ if there is bread in the school; and after the Sunday... if the students are compelled to take care of the livelihood for themselves.

The extent for writing in this year is the first part of... and

^{1 &#}x27;ABDĪŠŌ', Nomocanon, ed. ASSE-MANI, p. 273 f.

² IBN AŢ-ṬAIYIB, Fiqh an-naṣrānīya, ed. Hoenerbach et Spies, II, p. 161 f.

³ The manuscript has gaps here.

⁴ The word means 'a habitation' but here it means the period when the school was in session.

⁵ Unfortunately the text has several lacunae.

الحديدة محتاه محدد المحاددة المحادثة المحادثة

محیده دره در مادی.

maut $b\bar{c}^6$, the book of Paul and the Torah.

The one who teaches the chanting ⁷ shall teach together with the lections of the table ⁸ the funeral hymns ⁹.

But in the second year they shall write the second part of the *bēt mautbē* and David and the prophets; and together with the table of lections they shall learn the 'ūniātā 10' of the Mysteries 11.

In the third year the third part of the bēt mautbē and the

والتوراة وسليح اليشع.....

وفى السنة الثانية يكتب الجزء الثانى..... وداود والانبياء ويلبّخ عنايى الرازين

وفي اسنة الثالثة يقرأ الجزء الثالث

the book of Paul, the Torah, and Prophet Elisha.

In the second year the second part will be written... and David, the prophets and the 'ūniātā of the Mysteries will be taught.

In the third year the third part of the $mautb\bar{a}$ will be read

tence as 'the table of lections'.

⁹ The word means actually 'departed', 'defunct'. What is meant here are the liturgical parts in the funeral service.

10 The 'uniata are the 'chants' and 'responses', alternate verses sung by the choir.

11 These are the $\mbox{$^{\circ}$}\bar{u}ni\bar{a}t\bar{a}$ of the eucharistic liturgy.

⁶ bēt mautbē is a liturgical term and means a part of a service sung sitting or a division of the Psalms, or prayers repeated between the Psalms.

⁷ The Syriac word means 'company'; here it is used in the sense of 'choir'.

⁸ A more ordinary form of this phrase appears in the following sen-

من بثموتبا والاحدثا ويلبّخ العنايين محلاحك دسدلاك. محم لمسك ومع اللباخة يقرى الالواح دمند محلحم حقيك.

يقرأ الاحداث كلهم مزامير داوود وكتاب الاحدثا والقرايين التى يقرأ في الأحاد والأعياد والذكارين وسن يختار سنهم للكهنوت يقرأ من بعد الصورة والتفسير المختصر الذي لمار افرايم والطويل الذي لمار تاذورس ومن يختار للطبّ ينفذ الى البيمارستان وبالجملة جميع اولاد النصاري قبل تسليمهم في الصنائع يقرون الداوود والحديثة وفلاكيث القرايين

book of the New Testament, and together with the table of lections they shall learn the 'uniata'.

and the New Testament, the ' $\bar{u}ni\bar{a}t\bar{a}$ will be taught, and together with the instruction the tables will be read.

Psalms of David, the books of the New Testament and the lessons which are read on Sundays, feast- and commemoration-days; who ever among them is set apart for the priesthood, has to read besides the text also a short commentary by Mār Ephrēm and a long one by Mār Theodore; and who ever is set apart for the study of medicine will be sent to the hospital.

In short — all children of Christians before their introduction to professional training, shall read David, the New Testament and the sections of the lessons.

2. ANALYSIS

'Abdīšō''s claim is that this is a text which belongs to the traditions of the School of Nisibis. If so then another piece of the legislation has come down to us. However, such a claim must be submitted to examination.

There are some disquieting signs already in the history of the transmission of this text. While 'Abdīšō' puts boldly 'Of the School

of Nisibis' as the heading to the text, in an older tradition, as shown by Ibn at-Taiyib the title refers simply to the 'teachers', leaving the text in a vague state. Such a situation does not encourage one to put trust in 'Abdīšō''s title. How easily such a colorless title could be developed into a form we see now in 'Abdīšō''s work.

An examination of the intrinsic evidence leads us to some other observations which help to ripen the verdict. All these tend to strengthen the unfavorable impression 'Abdīšō''s contention has already made.

With regard to the time when the School of Nisibis was in session we are not in the dark. Our information concerns not only the older but also the later practice. The older tradition laid down in the statutes knew only one session with a fixed pattern so that the work in the school was in recess from the month of Ab (August) until Tešrī qadīm (October) when work was made possible 13. Barḥadbešabbā of Ḥolwān is our witness that later this system was found as impractical and was changed. The work in the school was reorganized so that there were two sessions, the $mautb\bar{a}$ of the summer and that of the winter 14. The revision was motivated by the seasons of harvest which were so important that they were taken into account. The new school year is described in the following way: 'likewise also the fathers have done that they have fixed for us the two works in two seasons: first the period of the summer-harvest, and then the $mautb\bar{a}$ of the Apostles; and first the period of the winter, the work on the figs and olives, and then the $mautb\bar{a}$ of the winter' 15. That means the first $mautb\bar{a}$ came after the harvest of grain and the second after the harvest of the fruit. The information that 'Abdīšo''s text provides does not fit in with the traditions of the School of Nisibis.

Furthermore, according to the text of 'Abdīšō' and Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib, the school normally provided maintenance for its students, and

copper rate with owner مر الم المرابع المايع المايع المرابع مدانیم مسعی جمهدی دهمه در احتی احتی به ادر م

¹³ See can. V, page 77 f.

provisions were made for an extraordinary situation when it was not able to feed them. It is clear that in the light of the statutes of the School of Nisibis, this was not the practice there. We are left with the impression that instruction in the School of Nisibis was free, but the students had to take care of their livelihood ¹⁶.

Finally, if the plus in the Arabic recension of this text stems from the same source, a new feature emerges which complicates the situation. This conjures up a situation which is different from all we know of the basic works used in the discipline of biblical exegesis. However much remains in darkness, but one thing is certain — there was no symbiosis of the exegetical works of Ephrēm and Theodore of Mopsuestia in the instruction. Already in the School of Edessa the commentaries of Ephrēm were replaced by those of Theodore 17, and in the School of Nisibis Theodore's works were used as normative, and their author was regarded as the 'Interpreter' 18.

¹⁶ See page 77 f., 93 f., 97.

17 BARHADBEŠABBĀ, Fondation, ed.

SCHER, p. 382.

¹⁸ See Vööbus, School of Nisibis, chapter V, 2 and VIII, 3, particularly III, 15.



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Ms. Ming. syr. 58: 25 13

Ms. Ming. syr. 120: 40 ²⁷

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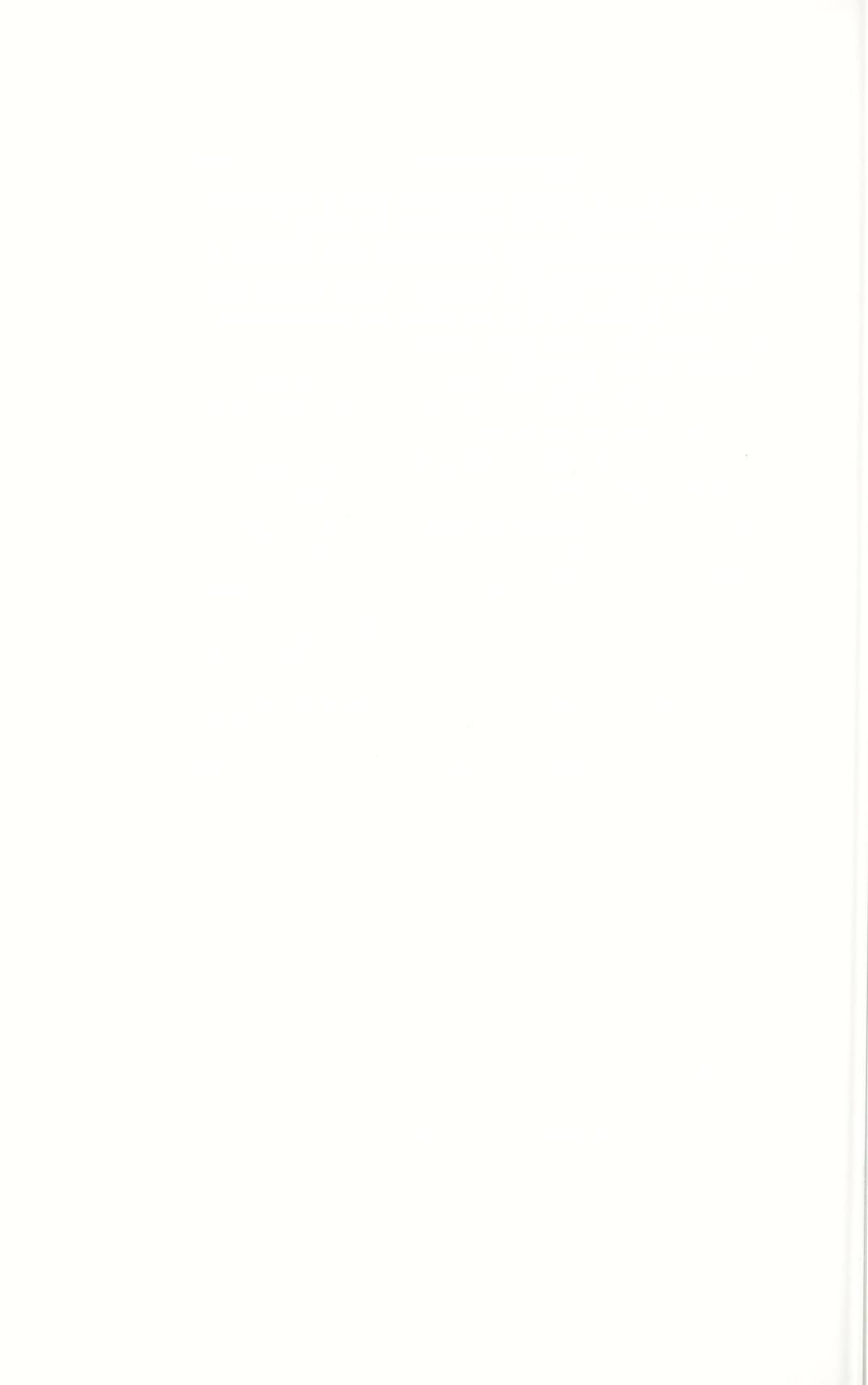
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